

Sunshine as the doctor ordered

I heard stories about how my dada, meaning my paternal grandfather, rubbed mustard oil on my months-old-body and played with me in the sunshine; stretching my limbs, making me lie on my tummy to strengthen my back, and fooling around to make me giggle. A sweet routine, which my mother then secretly abhorred because she thought too much sunshine and oil deepened further my already dark complexion.

There is no such thing called too much sunshine, we realise that now, my mom and I, and how important and necessary that routine was for me as a baby. And I understand that the colour of the skin never really mattered, though my mother begs to differ.



So, when the other day, I saw my mom soaking in the morning sun in her veranda and flipping through the newspaper, a practice she maintains for years now, I bantered, if she, who was consuming her daily dosage of sunshine vitamin, would now go dark sitting under the sun? And I sat down beside her to enjoy the sweet sun myself. While talking about the sunshine vitamin, she replied "Vitamin D3 is an all-encompassing supplement required for our bone health, immunity and muscle growth." I was impressed with her answer. Yet, I

retorted, that ever since her toddler age, she has been exposed to sunlight and has been drinking milk for calcium and yet suffers from the lack of these very supplements in her old age.

My mother does suffer from ailments related to osteoporosis and lack of vitamin D, the constant aches and cramps. It got me thinking that we, living in a tropical country, have always been exposed to sunlight and also have decent shares of fresh milk, but why do we still suffer skeletal ailments relating to lack of Vitamin D3 and calcium?

I wanted to understand this point and called my cousin, who happens to be a physician, who said that only people like mom and I suffer from the lack of it, because the majority of people in the villages, or people working outside, have no complain from the lack of D3. We hate the sun because we are concerned about wrinkles, ageing, and skin cancer, and are always living in an air-conditioned environment. And this very lifestyle has led to this deficiency.

If we don't have vitamin D in our body, then the calcium and phosphorous that we consume from our diet is not sufficient — and without enough calcium and phosphorus, our bones can become brittle and break easily, in addition to other health problems. Vitamin D is the key player here and it is produced in our skin naturally when exposed to sunlight. The main job of vitamin D is to keep the right amount of calcium and phosphorus in our blood, which work together to make our bones healthy and strong.

Until recently, the main role of vitamin D was to keep our bones healthy and prevent them from breaking, but now, it is believed that vitamin D also helps reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, autoimmune diseases, improves our mood and reduces depression, and boosts weight loss.

So, we try to pack more vitamin D into our daily routine by sitting under the sun, eating vitamin D rich food and taking supplements as prescribed by a healthcare professional only.

The sun shines at its happiest during the monsoon months, its sweet and bright, not scorching at all, so enjoy the sunshine vitamin as much as possible.

— RBR
Model: Arpita

◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Spend quality time with your partner. Make changes at home. Avoid speaking your mind this week. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Find ways to gain knowledge. Don't let anyone get you upset. Talk to someone you trust for advice. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Find ways to rekindle the romance. Find ways to persuade your opponents. Your partner can cause you some embarrassment. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Don't hold back. Don't be overbearing with your family. Find some time for your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Let others do their thing. Try to please family members. Don't spend your money on luxuries this week. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Don't believe everything you hear. Don't let yourself get rundown. Refrain from being judgmental. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Discuss your goals with your partner. Make real estate investments. Travel will be in your best interest. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Try redecorating your living quarters. Get your facts correct. New romantic relationships can develop through group interaction. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Anger will cause you grief. Don't give anyone chances to complain. Get involved in lucrative projects. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Don't exaggerate. Focus on every aspect of your life. Enjoy some socialising this week. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Your colleagues can help with the work. Make plans for entertainment. Keep your feelings to yourself. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Don't force others to see your point. Use your intellect to get things done. Avoid overspending on entertainment. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.