



ABSTRACT

The role of vitamin D during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia

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The latest national and global health crisis is the ongoing outbreak of the infectious respiratory disease that was named as Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in December 2019. The COVID-19 outbreak has affected almost all-important sectors such as health, travel, education and economy not only in the developing countries but also in the developed countries. Although in Malaysia the COVID-19 incidence is showing reducing trend but the incidence is dramatically increasing day by day some other countries. On top of muscular and skeletal health, vitamin D is reported to help in boosting the immune system via several mechanisms. With regards to viral infection such as COVID-19, vitamin D enhances cellular immunity by reducing the cytokine storm by reducing the expression of pro-inflammatory cytokines and increasing the expression of anti-inflammatory cytokines. Unfortunately, vitamin D or the sunshine vitamin is surprisingly lacking in majority Malaysian across all age groups. This is mainly due to limited intake of vitamin D rich food source in this region and due to sun ray avoidance behavior. Obesity further exacerbates deficiency as the fat-soluble vitamin D is sequestered and stored in adipose tissue instead of blood circulation. Hence, this presentation will discuss important points related to vitamin D during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia.

Keywords: COVID-19, novel coronavirus, vitamin D, Malaysian

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