**[Global With Matthew Amroliwala](https://scout.tveyes.com/)**

02/16/2017 11:20:45 AM

* [BBC World](https://scout.tveyes.com/) /

* [U.K. National](https://scout.tveyes.com/)

research suggest that vitamin D supplements could spare millions of people from colds or flu every year the analysis has been published in the British medical Journal and it argues that food should be fortified with vitamin D a health correspondent Dominic Hughes has its this is what vitamin D deficiency can look like softened bones burrowing under the weight of the body in children it can cause Ricketts but now researchers say vitamin D may have other benefits apart from strengthen bones a effectively given the boost production of a short and politics absences call antimicrobial peptides which toxic to bacteria and viruses we've shown that the effective and indeed

to prevent respect affection is on a par with those of flu vaccine that's a significant effect they argue that if they're be one got enough vitamin D they would be a 10 % reduction in the risk of respiratory illnesses such as coughs colds and flu among those with the very lowest levels of vitamin D the benefit is even greater a 50 % reduction and across the whole UK population that would equate to more than 3 million people avoiding a cold or flu each year sunlight on the skin is the best source of vitamin D but the increased use of sunscreen and down whether means exposure in the UK is limited it is possible to get vitamin D through some food so for example cereals particularly those marketed at children have vitamin D added as a supplement you can also get it from oily fish or makes although you have to eat 10 of them every day to ensure we got the right amount that Is arguing is that this means the should be added as a supplement to products like milk so that we all get a fair share but some scientists believe that fortifying food with vitamin D won't be enough the recommendation is is more around we should all take a supplement and in the winter months in order to him and those groups are at risk say people with dark skin or feel like outsiders much to take more here and while a specific benefits of vitamin D are still being debated sunshine and supplements seem to be the best sources Dominic Hughes BBC news for as a perspective from the UK am joined now by Regina keys to his course leader and lecturer in international public health nutrition at the University of Westminster and also uniform nurse and midwife as well as he travelled the world looking after children let me ask you that the situation in the UK were already talk about millions of people who are lacking in vitamin D make you wonder about the scale of the world broke and in the US and Europe alone about 40 % of adult population are vitamin D deficient we have is

much more difficult to ascertain in some of the more low income countries where it is harder to do those sort of assessments am but certainly by indeed efficiency does exist in places where and they have a lack of sunshine because obviously sunshine as one of the ways we get by in India he also get it from things like red meat and eating oily fish and its limited the all the jokes of aig's so as one of the problems is that some of the ways we get it that on the foods that we can actually get it from it food word occurs think that might damage as we said about sunlight because if we look at many parts of the world what they get plenty of sunlight but they've got vitamin D deficiency still you thought are still part of the world they do for example Mongolia and they have up to the infants can still have actually rickets which is the Apple acute form of it with you see a lack of vitamin D deficiency and they've got As much any more as you used to see that but again in Mongolia is about 60 % if you go to place for example in Nigeria they

have loads of sunlight they're but the wickets they have they're they have in Northern Nigeria for example in a place called good dinner and the vicar is more complicated form so it's not dark Tolly that that the sort of food diet they get the sunshine but they don't actually have all the factors that they need more complication riot there was a complex here and presumably also wounded and it was just that the question of sunlight we get it so easily there are cultural issues are religious issues as covering up and that's not always help and this is a huge issue a mean because it is the population who are more vulnerable so if you are in a population that are darker skin in Europe and we have less sunlight during the winter then you are will be more at risk at been and indeed deficient and I think there is an increasing knowledge about that and try to get those populations to take supplements has been on the NHS guidelines for many years now but the problems of course if you do have a supplementation someone ask you to do that not everybody feels will and so the idea of taking some wind was light we've tried a higher

turnout in this 50 % of the women of reproductive age in the world are anaemic a problem I'm putting supplement into that will dominate so put the milk and this is something that America does that put into the milk and other countries do this UK has discussed if they did do it earlier on that as things when we to make these decisions based on evidence and the evidence looks good is a peer reviewed journal the BMJ but the thing is to before we use evidence to make policies and to change guidelines which are very costly what is the impact of that and one of the impacts previously perceived was the impact on the blood of calcium is used to always a bit complicated but it's something that same caste in India help with how we look at phosphorus and and calcium absorption and use and therefore if you take it in the milk they have concerns if we add a fortified we could have over two much of it and the is concerned now about that now in 19 anyone when they did Million attrition did their guidelines it felt that we have the UK had enough

and through wide diet series every country will work out his own situation although they have reviewed it recently they now say that we do maybe have to consider too early exit from the top is that they've got plenty more to say but even that always reduces pretty much have a room with a do