**OUT WITH THE COLD**

**Seasonal sniffles could be a thing of the past if more people took vitamin D supplements**

by aoife bannon

16th February 2017, 7:12 am

A new study found that the sunshine vitamin fights respiratory infections such as colds and flus

**SEASONAL sniffles would get the cold shoulder if more took vitamin D supplements, it is claimed.**

While the sunshine vitamin has long been linked to bone health, a new study found it also fights respiratory infections such as colds and flus.

Researchers from the Queen Mary University of London analysed data from almost 11,000 participants aged up to 95 who took part in 25 clinical trials conducted in 14 countries.

Even after taking other factors into account, the researchers found that vitamin D supplementation cut the proportion of participants experiencing at least one acute respiratory tract infection by 12 per cent.

Lead researcher Professor Adrian Martineau, from QMUL, said: “The bottom line is that the protective effects of vitamin D supplementation are strongest in those who have the lowest vitamin D levels and when supplementation is given daily or weekly rather than in more widely spaced doses.

“Vitamin D fortification of foods provides a steady, low-level in- take of vitamin D that has virtually eliminated profound vitamin D deficiency in several countries.”

This tallies with the fact colds and flu are most common during winter and spring, when levels of vitamin D are at their lowest.

Respiratory tract infections hit sinuses, throats, airways or lungs and include the common cold, ear infections and pneumonia.

Researchers insisted public health policy could include vitamin D food fortification in darker countries like Ireland.