

SUNSHINE IN OUR SOUL

Susan Allen January 7, 2019, Lake Union Herald

"Life in the open air is good for the body and mind. It is God's medicine for restoration of health. Pure air, good water, sunshine, the beautiful surroundings of nature..."

Our region is in the depth of winter and a common complaint is the lack of sunshine. In fact, the Current Result website reports that during the months of December, January and February, there are only an average of 10 days that have 30 percent or less cloud coverage during the entire three months. This means there is, indeed, a lack of sunshine during the winter months. But, what does this mean in terms of our health and how we feel?

Sunshine is one of the eight natural remedies. We are counseled to "make use of the remedies that God has provided. Pure air, sunshine, and the intelligent use of water are beneficial agents in the restoration of health" (Ellen G. White, *Healthful Living*, p. 247). Sunshine is the best source of Vitamin D, and is naturally made in the body when sunshine hits the skin. Therefore, if there is limited sunshine, it could affect the level of Vitamin D in the body. Very few foods provide Vitamin D unless added by man. Then the product is referred to as "fortified."

Why is Vitamin D important?

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium, so it is helpful in developing strong bones. It also helps with muscle development, boosts the immune system, helps cell growth, aids in stabilizing blood pressure, and decreases inflammation.

Inadequate levels of Vitamin D is fairly common. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), approximately one in four people are affected by inadequacy which can lead to deficiency. In children, a Vitamin D deficiency can lead to a condition called rickets. This is where the bones become soft and the legs bow out. For adults, the symptoms may include depression, anxiety, fatigue, lack of endurance, rising blood pressure, brittle bones, muscle weakness and chronic pain. The symptoms may be vague and can be present in other conditions, so it is important to discuss this with your healthcare provider.

It is worth having a conversation with your healthcare provider to determine if a simple Vitamin D blood test is necessary. For those who are deficient, treatment may be as simple as an over-the-counter remedy or a prescription strength Vitamin D. Your healthcare provider will go over your results with you and determine what treatment, if any, is best for you.

We are instructed, "Life in the open air is good for the body and mind. It is God's medicine for the restoration of health. Pure air, good water, sunshine, the beautiful surroundings of nature — these are His means for restoring the sick to health in natural ways. To the sick, it is worth more than silver or gold to lie in the sunshine or shade of the trees" (Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 163).