

## Journals and Authors Should Work Together to Reduce Confusion about Vitamins

Yue Zhang\*

\*Corresponding author: Yue Zhang, Division of Genetics and Development, The Toronto Western Research Institute, Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network, 60 Leonard Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Tel: +1-416-603-5800 Ext 4797; Email: zy1001@yahoo.com

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### Editorial

Vitamins could prevent or reverse certain illness. However, journals may become the epitome of quality and reduce confusion about the use of vitamin supplements, and must demand research reproducibility not only for primary reports but also for secondary analyses; otherwise some issues raise [1].

Surprisingly, after the majority of articles appraised vitamin D as having beneficial effects for preventing chronic diseases, a burst of “U-turn” findings (i.e. negative/null findings) on vitamin D recently have emerged from elite journals such as *Annals of Internal Medicine* and *The Lancet*. This has stimulated much feedback and confusion [2]. However, readers care about whether journals guarantee publications with sound evidence and if “there is no bad publicity in science.”

Fortunately, some journals have started to explore double-blinded reviews, open interactive review, open access and other technical advancements, including DOI assignments for individual elements/parts in articles [3]. Possibly, the latter could elicit element-based independent citations and induce a new impact assessment system to reflect the soundness and significance of distinct elements rather than a mixture to calculate a journal’s impact factor and to expose elements’ reproducibility.

To achieve confident reproducibility, some simple basic and translational vitamin research may clarify severe confusion and

paradoxes because of data deficiency, since large-scale trials like VITAL are rare and expensive [4]. Currently, we may agree that the vitamin D receptor (VDR) can transcribe genes that prevent diseases. With wet-lab and *in silico* data, however, VDR could act as a capacitor to buffer detrimental genetic mutant variations within a certain scope [5]. Data are greatly needed, vitamin D supplements could have either beneficial or no (personal and context-dependent) effects. In the future, personalized medicine using an individual’s genetic variation information may equip us with a subgroup’s vitamin baseline to obtain the clear effects of vitamins.

### References

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