

Vitamin D prescribing practices amongst clinical practitioners during COVID-19

Edward Jude¹, Moi Hoon Yap², Ashu Rastogi³, Nicholas Tentolouris⁴, Hermelinda Pedrosa⁵, and Stephanie Ling⁶

¹Manchester Academic Health Science Centre

²Manchester Metropolitan University - All Saints Campus

³Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research

⁴Laiko General Hospital

⁵Regional Hospital of Taguatinga

⁶Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

May 27, 2021

Abstract

COVID-19 has caused devastation globally mostly affecting countries in colder climates. Therefore, vitamin D is thought to be one of the contributing factors towards causation and severity. Many guidelines do not recommend vitamin D for treatment or prevention. Hence, we set out to do a global survey to understand the use and prescribing habits of vitamin D amongst clinicians. Methods: Online anonymous questionnaire was sent to clinicians enquiring in their prescribing habits of vitamin D and personal use of vitamin D. Results: 4,440 practicing clinicians were included in the analysis with majority of those that responded were from Asia followed by Europe. 82.9% prescribed vitamin D before COVID-19, more commonly amongst general practitioners (GPs) and Asian clinicians more likely to prescribe vitamin D ($p < 0.005$). GPs were also more likely to prescribe vitamin D prophylactically to prevent COVID-19 (OR 1.47, $p < 0.005$). Majority would also prescribe vitamin D to treat COVID-19 (72.5%; OR:1.81, $p < 0.005$), as well as Asian clinicians (OR 4.57, $p < 0.005$). 80.4% of respondents were taking vitamin D, more so in the 45-54 and 65-74 age groups (OR2.15 and 2.40, respectively), many of whom did so before COVID-19 (72.1%). Conclusion: Clinicians from different countries have acknowledged the role of vitamin D during the COVID-19 pandemic. This survey has shown that many clinicians would prescribe vitamin D for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19. Majority also would recommend measuring vitamin D levels but not so in patients with COVID-19.

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