

Are You Getting Enough? Empowering Health with Vitamin D



Held on International Vitamin D Day

(Nov 1, 2024 Toronto, Ontario and Nov 2, 2024 Chatham, Ontario)

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Brief Bios of the Symposium Speakers and Chairs

Professor Bonnie Mallard (PhD)



Symposium Chair

Professor of Immunology and Immunogenetics in the Department of Pathobiology, University of Guelph. Dr. Mallard's research program focusses on genetic regulation of the immune system in mammals and its impact on disease resistance. She is also interested in the impact of immunoceuticals on the immune system, including the role of Vitamin D. She is winner of numerous awards, including the prestigious Governor General's Award for Innovation and the NSERC Synergy Prize for her work in immunogenetics. She is also the CEO of ImmunoCeutica Labs and Technologies which seeks to help empower immunity naturally.

Emeritus Professor Kanji Nakatsu (PhD)**Symposium Co-Chair**

Professor Emeritus in the Department of Biomedical and Molecular Sciences, School of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, Queen's University. Dr. Nakatsu's areas of expertise include general pharmacology, pharmacology of heme oxygenase, potential therapeutic applications of carbon monoxide and cardiovascular pharmacology. He is passionately interested in the role of Vitamin D in health and wellbeing.

Dr. Reinhold Vieth (PhD)**Symposium Presentation (Keynote Address). Title TBA.**

Professor Emeritus Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto. Dr. Vieth's expertise includes biochemical markers of calcium, bone metabolism and osteoporosis. He also works in the area of clinical nutrition including the role of Vitamin D in health and well-being. He has looked extensively at the safety and efficacy of Vitamin D. He is also interested in Vitamin D in the prevention of osteoporosis and cancer.

Professor Phil Britz-McKibbin (PhD)**Symposium Presentation: *Rapid normalization of Vitamin D3 deficiency in critically ill children: Insights into precision nutrition.***

Professor, Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada. Dr. Britz-McKibbin obtained a BSc in Chemistry (UoToronto, 1994), a PhD in Analytical Chemistry (UBC, 2000), and a position in the Japan Society for Promotion of Science (Hyogo University, Japan 2001-2003) prior to his academic position at McMaster. His research group is an affiliate member of The Metabolomics Innovation Centre (TMIC) – Canada's national metabolomics laboratory. Philip's research group develops untargeted mass spectrometry-based methods in metabolomics for biomarker discovery with emphasis on nutrition, Drug screening and lifestyle modifications for improved chronic disease prevention.

Professor Niel Karrow (PhD)

Symposium Presentation: *Genetic and epigenetic variants that predetermine individual Vitamin D status.*

Professor of Immunology and Immunotoxicology, Department of Animal BioScience, University of Guelph. Dr. Karrow's research interests focus on innate immunoregulation, immunotoxicology and immunogenetics. This includes identifying genetic markers associated with inflammatory diseases, assessing the effects of maternal inflammatory stress on the developing fetal neuroendocrine-immune system, assessing efficacy of immunocuticals, and characterising the immunotoxicity of microbial toxins. He has a longstanding interest in how nutrients, including Vitamin D, affect the immune system.

Dr. Gerry Schwalfenberg (MD)

Symposium Presentation: *Vitamin D through the Life Cycle.*

Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine, University of Alberta. Dr. Schwalfenberg has been in solo family practice for 44 years in Edmonton, and he has a keen interest in nutrition and environmental health. He received the Alberta College of Family Medicine award of Excellence in 2007. He has written or coauthored 35 peer-reviewed papers, of which at least 12 are on Vitamin D and its effect on health. He has lectured in the past on Vitamin D and immune function, Vitamin D and autoimmune disease, Vitamin D and interactions with minerals and toxic elements, Vitamin D and economic savings with supplementation (estimated to be \$14-21B annually in health care), Omega 3 fatty acids, Vitamin K, and magnesium. Articles available on Research Gate.

Dr. Byram Bridle (PhD)



Symposium Presentation: *The Immune System, Cancer and Vitamin D.*

Associate Professor of Viral Immunology and Cancer Biology, Department of Pathobiology, University of Guelph. Dr. Bridle's lab develops novel, highly targeted biotherapies for the treatment of cancers. Two approaches are combined in his research program: (a) cancer immunotherapy that directs the power of a patient's immune system against their own tumour(s) and, (b) oncolytic virotherapy, which utilizes viruses that replicate in and kill only cancerous cells. A second emphasis of the lab is the study of host responses to viruses. An area of focus is developing a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying virus-induced cytokine storms. Dr. Bridle's research team has identified a critical role of signaling through the type I interferon receptor in the negative regulation of an extensive network of cytokines. He is interested in how immunoceuticals, such as Vitamin D, influence the immune system and how they might be used to improve cancer outcomes.

Dr. Armen Charchoglyan (PhD)



Symposium Presentation: *Measuring Vitamin D using Mass Spectrophotometry, ELISA and Lateral Flow Assay: Which Test to Use and When.*

Dr. Charchoglyan completed his Ph.D. in Biotechnology, at Yerevan State University and National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, studying medical attributes of St. John's Wort and developing controlled environmental platforms for production of medicinal plant bioactive compounds *in vitro*. His postdoctoral fellowship research in Japan and Germany focused on developing metabolic engineering approaches to enhance biomass production and specialized cell and tissue growth for secondary product biosynthesis. He is currently a Research Assistant, at the Advanced Analytical Centre, University of Guelph, developing a metabolomics platform at the Mass Spectrometry Facility. He is conducting research in Chemical Biology, Analytical Chemistry, and Biochemistry. His collaboration with immunology researchers has led to the development of methods for immune system biomarker research and the formulation and evaluation of immunomodulating compounds. Among his recent publications are "N-acetylcysteine and Its Immunomodulatory Properties in Humans and Domesticated Animals" in *Antioxidants*, 2023, and "Immunoceuticals: Harnessing Their Immunomodulatory Potential to Promote Health and Wellness" in *Nutrients*, 2022.

Dr. Linda Rapson (MD)



Symposium Presentation: *Vitamin D Deficiency and Pain.*

Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto and Affiliate Scientist, UHN/Toronto Rehabilitation Institute. Dr. Rapson has been an influential advocate for the awareness and inclusion of acupuncture and nutrition in mainstream medicine. Her areas of expertise include neuropathic pain in spinal cord injury as well as ubiquitous chronic myofascial pain. Guided by the medical literature on chronic pain, she began testing Vitamin D levels in her pain patients in 2004 and was shocked to find very low levels in many of them. Today she continues to advocate for Vitamin D in general, not only for pain management, but also for general health. She was a co-winner of the prestigious Dr. Rogers Prize for Excellence in Complementary and Alternative Medicine in 2021 for her leadership in promoting integrative medicine in Canada.

Dr. Aileen Burford-Mason (PhD)



Symposium Presentation: *To Test or Not to Test: Current Controversies and Recommendations on Vitamin D Testing.*

Former Assistant Professor, Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, and Director of a Cancer Research Laboratory, Toronto General Hospital. Dr. Burford-Mason is a biochemist, immunologist and cell biologist and a widely recognized expert in the field of vitamins and their appropriate use in health maintenance, healthy aging and the prevention and treatment of disease. Her many research papers are published in leading medical and scientific journals. She regularly gives talks to the public and to doctors and other health professionals at universities across Canada. She has a busy private practice where she specializes in personalized supplement and diet regimes. She teaches a popular continuing medical education course for medical doctors and other health care practitioners on the use of diet and nutritional supplements in clinical practice. A go-to person for radio, TV and print journalists, Aileen is in regular demand for media commentary on the latest research and controversies in the field of dietary supplements.

Dr. James Lunney (DC, Former Member of Parliament)



Symposium Presentation: *Advocating as a Member of Parliament for those at Highest Risk of Vitamin D insufficiency.*

Dr. Lunney has 24 years of clinical practice as a chiropractor in two provinces. He has special interest in integrative functional medicine, orthomolecular approaches, naturopathic and energy therapeutics. He was elected five times as a member of Parliament (MP) for Nanaimo—Alberni from 2000 to 2015. As an MP, he sat for 6 years on the Health Committee, briefed by federal officials on numerous previous pandemics. Dr. Lunney has been extensively involved in natural product regulation debates over several parliaments. He has been a long-time advocate of the National Vitamin D Day since 2012, and participated in the last major Vitamin D conference with Health Canada in attendance in Ottawa in 2014.

Dr. Michael Holick (MD, PhD) – Closing Address



Symposium Presentation: Title TBA. Suggested Topic: A Global Perspective on Vitamin D: Past, Present and Future Challenges.

Dr. Holick is a world-renowned pioneer of vitamin D research. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine, a Fellow of the American College of Nutrition, and a member of the American Association of Physicians. He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including the General Clinical Research Centers Program Award for Excellence in Clinical Research from NIH, American College of Nutrition's Communication Media Award, Best Docs in America, the Linus Pauling Functional Medicine Award from the Institute for Functional Medicine and the Linus Pauling Prize for Human Nutrition. Dr. Holick serves on a number of national committees and editorial boards and has organized and/or co-chaired several international symposia. He served as the chair for the Endocrine Society's Practice Guidelines on Vitamin D. He has authored more than 400 peer-reviewed publications, and written more than 200 review articles, as well as numerous book chapters.