Another one habitual treatment bites the dust?

By ACSH Staff — February 26, 2013

It has long been recommended that women take vitamin D and calcium supplements to prevent fractures from osteoporosis. However, the U.S Preventive Services Task Force is now recommending [1] against the use of low or moderate doses of the supplements for postmenopausal women, saying that they do not work to prevent fractures and may put women at higher risk for kidney stones. There was not enough evidence to make recommendations regarding high doses of these supplements.

This new recommendation is based on systematic reviews from 16 randomized controlled trials and a meta-analysis of vitamin D supplementation. Despite the finding that half of all women over 50 experience an osteoporosis related fracture, it was also found that there was a substantial increase in the risk of kidney stones in those women taking vitamin D and calcium supplements. The USPSTF continues to recommend that community-dwelling adults aged 65 and older who are at increased risk for falls, take vitamin D supplements to prevent falls and receive screening for osteoporosis.

Dr. Cliff Rosen, past president of the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research says, I think the two biggest public health messages are to supplement calcium with diet and keep your weight down. And researchers will continue looking at the role of vitamin D in cancer and cardiovascular disease prevention, as well as working to make recommendations on screening for vitamin D deficiency.