

# Breakthrough: Vitamin D Supplements Taken During Pregnancy Found to Reduce Autism in Children

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Australia: A recent study using laboratory mice showed that vitamin D supplements during pregnancy can prevent the onset of autism spectrum disorder in offspring. The lead researcher said that the results demonstrate that vitamin D levels are a crucial factor in brain development. Additional human studies suggest a correlation between low vitamin D levels in pregnant women and infant autism.

Taking vitamin D supplements during pregnancy can prevent the onset of autism spectrum disorder in children, a recent animal study showed. Researchers at the *University of Queensland* in Australia say that pregnant mice who are given active vitamin D treatment during their equivalent first trimester bear offspring that **do not not exhibit autism-related behaviors**.

The study used a widely accepted model of autism in mice, which lists symptoms such as abnormal behavior and basic learning and social interaction deficits.

The results demonstrate that **vitamin D levels** are a crucial factor in brain development, says lead researcher Professor Darryl Eyles.

“Recent funding will now allow us to determine how much cholecalciferol – the supplement form that is safe for pregnant women – is needed to achieve the same levels of active hormonal vitamin D in the bloodstream. This new information will allow us to further investigate the ideal dose and timing of vitamin D supplementation for pregnant women,” says researcher Dr. Wei Luan.

The results were published in the journal *Molecular Autism*.

## Human studies show correlation between vitamin D levels, autism onset

Various human studies have previously established a **link between vitamin D intake and the onset of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children**.

Autism experts at China’s *First Hospital of Jilin University* noted that a 32 month-old toddler with ASD who had daily oral intake and monthly injection of vitamin D3 showed a marked improvements in behavior. According to the researchers, the boy was more responsive, stopped banging his head, and running in circles at two months following the vitamin D intervention. However, the researchers cautioned that the single case study cannot be taken as a general representation for all autism patients. The results of the case study was published in *Pediatrics*, the official journal of the *American Academy of Pediatrics*.

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