Vitamin D and Acute Respiratory Viral Infections
A Large-scale Pharmacoepidemiologic Study
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Overview

- Martineau et.al. BMJ (2017) meta-analysis of 25 RCTs of vitamin D (vD)
  - Acute respiratory infections
  - Overall: OR=.88 overall,
  - Vitamin D deficient (vDD): OR=0.3 in vDD deficient
  - Do these results generalize to the population?
- We studied Medicare, MarketScan, and VA Medical Claims Databases (44 million+150 million+18 million)
- Examine the association between vD prescriptions and acute viral respiratory infection (AVRI), influenza, and COVID-19
- AVRI - Within-subject design, with propensity-score matched control sample (difference in difference).
- COVID – Between-subject design, propensity score matched, time to event
Statistical Methods

- AVRI and influenza - Within-subject design.
- Compare rate of AVRI before and after index vD prescription in treated and controls
  - GEE Poisson model – population averaged (marginal) estimator
  - GEE and Mixed-effects logistic regression model for monthly analyses
    - Unit-specific (SAS, Stata, R)
    - Population averaged (SuperMix) see Hedeker et.al. 2018 *Biometrics*
  - D2 vs D3 monotherapy as separate analyses
  - DIF in DIF with monthly time trends pre and post exposure
    - Models with and without parallel time trend assumption
  - Time frame – AVRI and Influenza
    - +/- 12 months around index prescription fill
Statistical Methods

- Primary Analysis – Compare AVRI rate before and after 1st prescription fill in vD users and propensity matched controls (DID) using +/- 12-month interval
- Sensitivity analyses
  - Treat vD as a time-varying exposure in treated only
  - Restrict sample to patients with vitamin D deficiency (vDD) diagnoses
  - Compare counts pre and post averaging over time
- Model monthly time trends before and after treatment initiation
  - Code time as 0-11 pre and 0-12 post where post=0 is index script fill
  - Logit(AVRI) = b0 + b1*tx + b2*month + b3*period + b4*tx*month + b5*tx*period + b6*month*period + b7*tx*month*period
Statistical Methods

- COVID-19
  - Primary Analysis
    - Define cohort as anyone with a vitamin D prescription fill from 1/1/19-2/28/20, who never had a prior vitamin D prescription fill.
    - Matched controls with no vitamin D prescription history
    - Analysis time, March 2020 through December 2020
    - Compare treated and controls in terms of time to laboratory confirmed COVID-19 separately for D2 and D3
      - Discrete-time survival model
      - Kaplan Meier
      - Cox regression
Acute Respiratory Viral Infections

1. J00 - Acute nasopharyngitis [common cold]
2. J06 - Acute upper respiratory infections of multiple and unspecified sites
3. J09 - Influenza due to certain identified influenza viruses
4. J10 - Influenza due to other identified influenza virus
5. J11 - Influenza due to unidentified influenza virus
6. J12 - Viral pneumonia, not elsewhere classified
7. J18 - Pneumonia, unspecified organism
8. J20.4 - Acute bronchitis due to parainfluenza virus
9. J20.5 - Acute bronchitis due to respiratory syncytial virus
10. J20.6 - Acute bronchitis due to rhinovirus
11. J20.7 - Acute bronchitis due to echovirus
12. J21.0 - Acute bronchiolitis due to respiratory syncytial virus
14. B34.0 - Adenovirus
15. B34.2 - Coronavirus infection, unspecified
16. B34.8 - Rhinovirus
17. B97.2 - Coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere
   a. B97.21 - SARS-associated coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere
   b. B97.29 - Other coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere
18. B97.4 - Respiratory syncytial virus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Unique Patients</th>
<th>Proportion of Total Patients</th>
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<tr>
<td>4019</td>
<td>Unspecified essential hypertension</td>
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<td>2724</td>
<td>Hyperlipidemia</td>
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<td>Anemia</td>
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<td>Long Term Use of Medications</td>
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<td>Limb Pain</td>
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<td>V0481</td>
<td>Need for prophylactic vaccination and inoculation against influenza</td>
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<td>1 ERGOCALCIFEROL (VITAMIN D2)</td>
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<td>12 DOXERCALCIFEROL</td>
<td>0.5 MCG</td>
<td>1177</td>
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<td>13 ALENDRONATE SODIUM/VITAMIN D3</td>
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<td>22 CALCIUM CARBONATE/VITAMIN D3</td>
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Matching Variables

- Hypertension
- Hyperlipidemia
- Diabetes
- In need of immunization (e.g., flu)
- Reflux
- Anemia
- Hypothyroidism
- Long Term Use Medications
- Limb Pain
- Fatigue
- Hypercholesterolemia
- Depression
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Control index date set to treated Vitamin D index date
Available Data (All Ages)

• **Medicare** – 2010-2016  
  • D2 N = 59,216  
  • D3 N = 140,805

• **MarketScan** – 2010-2016  
  • D2 N = 2,530,703  
  • D3 N = 30,262

• **VA** – 2010-2020  
  • D2 N = 815,455  
  • D3 N = 1,355,889
Total Viral Infections by Month (2010-2016)
Vitamin D3 Treated & Control
VA Data
Tx by period by time (at 12 months post) OR = 0.51, 95% CI (0.48, 0.55), p=0.0001 (5.4% reduction in rate per month) 
N=34,718,568 months (1,388,744 patients) and 158,643 AVRI claims – All patients have 25 months of observation
VA Data: D2 vs AVRI

Observed

Expected

Tx by period by time (at 12 months post) OR = 0.48, 95% CI (0.43, 0.54), p=0.0001 (6.0% reduction in rate per month)
N=10,362,024 months (414,480 patients) and 53,045 AVRI claims – All patients have 25 months of observation
VA COVID Results

- 41,103 treated with an index vitamin D2 date 1/1/19 - 2/28/20
- 134,459 treated with an index vitamin D3 date 1/1/19 - 2/28/20
- Same numbers of matching controls for D2 and D3
- Month 0 = March 2020
- Month 9 = December 2020
- Months of observations D2 = 786,342, D3 = 2,571,103
- D2 - 1,361 COVID-19 cases (1.7% lab confirmed U07.1)
- D3 – 4,983 COVID-19 cases (1.9% lab confirmed U07.1)
- CDC case counts and death counts include both confirmed and probable cases and deaths U07.1 and U07.2
- Average number of prescriptions filled = 1.79
Discrete Time Survival Model
Cumulative Survival Functions

HR = 0.893, 95% CI=(0.845, 0.943), p<0.0001

HR = 0.794, 95% CI=(0.714, 0.883), p<0.0001

Cumulative probability of COVID-19 in D2 treated as of 12/31/2020 = 1.55%, control = 1.95%  RR=0.795
Kaplan Meier Curves

D2

Log Rank test – chi-square = 17.46, df=1, p<0.0001
Cox Model HR = 0.797 (0.716, 0.887), p<0.0001

D3

Log Rank test – chi-square = 7.02, df=1, p=0.008
Cox Model HR = 0.891 (0.843, 0.942), p<0.0001
COVID-19 - Next Steps

• Combine ICD-10 Codes U07.1 (confirmed) and U07.2 (unconfirmed)

• Augment outcomes for COVID-19 related events.
  • COVID-19 with pneumonia (U07 + J12.89)
  • COVID-19 with acute bronchitis (U07 + J20.8)
  • COVID-19 with lower respiratory infection (U07 + J40)
  • COVID-19 with acute respiratory distress syndrome (U07 + J80)
  • COVID-19 resulting in death

• Non-proportional hazards Model

• Are all formulations/dosages equivalent?
Conclusions

• Vitamin D is associated with decreases in rate of acute viral respiratory infections and COVID-19.
• For AVRI effect is largest following vitamin D initiation and decreases over time.
• D2 appears to be equal to or better than D3
• In 2020 D2 was associated with a 20% reduction in COVID-19
• In 2020 D3 was associated with a 11% reduction in COVID-19
• These effects are lower bounds because they ignore OTC vD
• Extrapolation, as of 12/2020, D2 would have reduced the total number of COVID-19 cases by 4,202,938 in the US.