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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Study Finds Calcium and Vitamin D Nutrient Deficiencies Lead to Higher Risk for Osteoporosis in Low Income U.S. Population**

**WEST HILLS, Calif. (July 28, 2020)** – Pharmavite LLC, the makers of Nature Made vitamins, minerals and supplements, announced the publication of a research article in the journal *PLoS ONE*, which examines inadequate nutrient intake and its relationship to poor bone health, specifically risk of osteoporosis. The research was a cross sectional analysis of the U.S population [from National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) data], with a specific focus on those below the poverty line with food insecurities.

Poverty can be a barrier to routinely acquiring adequate nutrient intakes, specifically for calcium and vitamin D, to ensure bone health with the ultimate goal of preventing of osteoporosis. Age, gender and dietary intake are major factors that contribute to osteoporosis prevalence. This study examined the relationship between markers of poverty with calcium and vitamin D intake and osteoporosis in Americans, 50 years and older.

“This study continues to demonstrate how prevalent nutrient deficiency is among the U.S. population, and even more so, among lower income individuals and those with food insecurities. Yet, we know that nutrient adequacy is imperative in supporting overall health and wellness, including immune health, at a time when that is heavy on everyone’s mind,” said Susan Hazels Mitmesser, PhD, Vice President of Science & Technology at Pharmavite.

In the U.S., 25% of older Americans live below the poverty line. Within this population, 68% have inadequate calcium intakes, and 46% have inadequate vitamin D intakes. Gender, ethnic, and socio-economic differences impact overall risk for inadequate calcium and vitamin D intakes and subsequent osteoporosis risk, as seen in some of the study key findings:

- American women over the age of 50 consistently have inadequate calcium intake regardless of their economic status.
- Inadequate intake of calcium and vitamin D affects poverty-stricken men more than women with respect to osteoporosis risk.
- Non-Hispanic Black men with a low income have two times greater risk for developing osteoporosis.

“Improving the consumption of nutrient-rich and fortified foods among individuals that live in poverty can help to decrease their chances of developing osteoporosis. Additionally, dietary supplements can play a critical role in helping any underserved population meet their nutrition needs—including making supplements readily available through programs like SNAP, for example,” adds Mitmesser. “Our research demonstrates that participants with SNAP benefits and more access to food, have fewer nutrient inadequacies which helps them meet their nutrition needs.”

It has been estimated in the U.S. population age 50 and older, about 10.2 million suffer from osteoporosis, and 80% of these affected cases are females. In addition, there are potentially 43.4 million people, or 44% of the population with osteopenia, which is a bone condition that often leads to osteoporosis.<sup>i</sup> More than two million osteoporosis-related fractures occur annually, leading to more than 19 billion dollars in health care costs in the US.<sup>ii iii</sup>

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Access the full research study, “Inadequate calcium and vitamin D intake and osteoporosis risk in older Americans living in poverty with food insecurities” here:

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0235042>

## **About Pharmavite LLC**

Pharmavite is a leader in the health and wellness industry, earning the trust of healthcare professionals, consumers, and retailers by manufacturing high-quality nutrition products and solutions under its Nature Made®, MegaFood, EQUELLE® and nurish by Nature Made brands. Pharmavite is dedicated to helping people live healthier, more vital lives by producing the highest quality products and providing trust and transparency. Based in California, Pharmavite LLC is a subsidiary of Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. Visit [www.pharmavite.com](http://www.pharmavite.com) for more information.

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<sup>i</sup> Wright NC, Looker AC, Saag KG, Curtis JR, Delzell ES, Randall S, et al. The recent prevalence of osteoporosis and low bone mass in the United States based on bone mineral density at the femoral neck or lumbar spine. *J Bone Miner Res.* 2014;29(11):2520–6. pmid:24771492

<sup>ii</sup> Burge R, Dawson-Hughes B, Solomon DH, Wong JB, King A, Tosteson A. Incidence and Economic Burden of Osteoporosis-Related Fractures in the United States, 2005–2025. *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research.* 2001;22(3):465–75.

<sup>iii</sup> Cram P, Saag KG, Lou Y, Edmonds SW, Hall SF, Roblin DW, et al. Racial Differences and Disparities in Osteoporosis-related Bone Health: Results From the PAADRN Randomized Controlled Trial. *Med Care.* 2017;55(6):561–8. pmid:28288074