

COVER

<https://midwifery.iocspublisher.org/index.php/midwifery/issue/view/30>

Vol. 13 No. 6 (2026): Health Sciences and related fields

Health Sciences and related fields



DAFTAR ISI

Implementation of the qanun no smoking area regulation at SMP Negeri 32 Takengon

Satria Budi, Donal Nababan, Frida Lina Tarigan, Kesaktian Manurung, Mido Ester J. Sitorus 1655-1665



The potential of trigona honey as a hemoglobin booster and immunomodulator in pregnant women with iron deficiency anemia

Ricca Afrida, Winda Nurmayani, Susilia Idyawati, Hawari Jannati, Raudatul Jannah 1529-1535




Public knowledge about smoking as a triggering factor for oral cavity cancer

Arief Siddik Taufan, Shelly Lelyana, Dicha Yuliadewi, Leonardo Jaya Setiadi Tanumiharja 1500-1508



Late-pregnancy anxiety as a distinct multidimensional construct: Psychometric evidence from a community-based sample

Nurul Jannah, Gunavathy Selvarajh 1562-1570



Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D is associated with body fat percentage and skeletal muscle mass in adults: A cross-sectional study

Meutia Atika Faradilla, Deasyka Yastani, Yohana Yohana, Karina Shasri Anastasya, Nabila Maudy Salma 1627-1635



The effect of giving pumpkin pudding (curcubita moschata) on sleep quality postpartum

Sandy Nurlaela Rachman, Lina Mardianti, Ilvika Mei Alkafili 1666-1673



Emotional intelligence and caring behavior among nurses at Dr. M. Djamil General Hospital Padang

Dorisnita Dorisnita, Hartati Hartati, Melia Nuriyansyah 1509-1518



Fissure tongue condition in a patient with down syndrome: A case report

Leonardo Jaya Setiadi Tanumiharja, Anna Nur Azizah, Edria Benita Tampubolon, Patoni Patoni, Marvin Jaya Setiadi Tanumiharja 1495-1499



EDITORIAL BOARD

<https://midwifery.iocspublisher.org/index.php/midwifery/about/editorialTeam>

Editorial Team

Editor in Chief

- Dr. dr. D. K. Keliat, Spa, ([Scopus Profil](#)), Medan, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Inedonesia

Associate Editors

- Dr. Leila Mohammadinia, Ph.D., MS, BS, ([Scopus Profil](#)) School of Management and Information Sciences, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran
- Dr. Malakeh Zuhdi Malak, Ph.D., ([Scopus Profil](#)) Associate Professor in Community Health Nursing, Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan, Amman
- Dr. Satyanarayan Labani, ([Scopus Profil](#)) National Institute of Cancer Prevention & Research, Noida, India
- Joko Gunawan, S.Kep.Ns MN, Ph.D., ([Scopus Profil](#)) Chulalongkrong University, Thailand,
- Prof. Aytac GUDER, PhD., ([Scopus Profil](#)) Department Of Medical Services and Techniques, Vocational High School of Health, Giresun University, Turkey
- Prof. Eileen Savage, ([Scopus Profil](#)) School of Nursing and Midwifery, University College Cork, Ireland
- Prof. Francesco Carelli, FD, MD, MSc., ([Scopus Profil](#)) Professor at University of Milan, Rome and Bari for Undergraduate Students and Specializing Doctors and Masters, Italy
- Prof. Magda Moawad Mohamad Mohsen, PhD., ([Scopus Profil](#)) Professor of Community Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Menoufia University, Egypt
- Prof. Urmila Bhardwaj, ([Scopus Profil](#)) Principal, Rufaida College of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi
- Prof. Yau Sui Yu, PhD., ([Scopus Profil](#)) Associate Professor, School of Nursing and Health Studies, Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
- Prof. Denise Fassett, BHS.RN.MN.PhD, ([Scopus Profil](#)) Faculty Of Health, Departement Nursing and Midwifery, University of Tasmania, Australia
- Prof. John Christian Fox, MD, RDMS, FAIUM, ([Scopus Profil](#)) School Of Medicine, University Of California, Irvine, US
- dr.Leo Simanjuntak, SpOG, ([Scopus Profil](#)), Medan, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Inedonesia
- Prof Dr H Aslim Sihotang, SPM-KVR, ([Scopus Profil](#)), Medan, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Inedonesia
- Naety, SST., M.Keb, ([Google Scholar Profil](#)) Medan, Universitas Darma Agung, Indonesia
- Efi Satriana Silalahi, SST, MKM, ([Google Scholar Profil](#)), STIKE Mitra Sejati, Medan, Indonesia
- Ns. Sumandar, S.Kep, M.Kes, ([Google Scholar Profil](#)) STIKes Al-Insyirah Pekanbaru, Riau, Indonesia
- Riny Apriani S.Kep., Ns., M.Kep., ([Google Scholar Profil](#)) STIKES Binalita Sudama Medan, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

ARTIKEL TERAKREDITASI SINTA 3

SERTIFIKAT

Direktorat Jendral Pendidikan Tinggi, Riset dan Teknologi
Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia



Kutipan dari Keputusan Direktorat Jendral Pendidikan Tinggi, Riset, dan Teknologi
Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia

Nomor: 152/E/KPT/2023

Peringkat Akreditasi Jurnal Ilmiah Periode II Tahun 2023

Nama Jurnal Ilmiah:

Science Midwifery

E-ISSN: 27219453

Institute Of Computer Science

Ditetapkan Sebagai Jurnal Ilmiah:

TERAKREDITASI PERINGKAT 3

Akreditasi Berlaku selama 5 (lima) Tahun, yaitu:
Volume 11 Nomor 1 Tahun 2023 sampai Volume 15 Nomor 6 Tahun 2027
Jakarta, 25 September 2023

Plt. Direktur Jendral Pendidikan Tinggi, Riset, dan Teknologi



Prof. Ir. Nizam, M.Sc., DIC, Ph.D., IPU, ASEAN Eng
NIP. 196107061987101001

BUKTI KOMUNIKASI DAN SUBMISSION

Science Midwifery

[Back to Submissions](#)

Workflow

Publication

Submission

Review

Copyediting

Production

Submission Files

[Q Search](#)

▶  13789 3. Body Composition and Vitamin D Status.docx January 23, 2026 Article Text

[Download All Files](#)

Pre-Review Discussions

[Add discussion](#)

Name	From	Last Reply	Replies	Closed
▶ Comments for the Editor	meutia 2026-01-23 05:23 AM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>


1st Pre-Evaluation	hemarosheny 2026-01-23 08:34 AM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Revisi Manuskrip dengan Template	meutia 2026-01-24 07:01 AM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
2st Pre-Evaluation	hemarosheny 2026-01-24 02:08 PM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Revisi Manuskrip	meutia 2026-01-24 03:54 PM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
Article goes to content review	hemarosheny 2026-01-25 03:41 AM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>

Review Discussions					Add discussion
Name	From	Last Reply	Replies	Closed	
Accepted Submission with Minor Revision	hemarosheny 2026-01-30 01:53 PM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	
▶ Revised Manuscript	meutia 2026-02-01 05:06 AM	-	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Article goes to copyediting stage	hemarosheny 2026-02-05 04:32 AM	meutia 2026-02-05 05:41 AM	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Workflow **Publication**

Submission Review **Copyediting** Production

Copyediting Discussions					Add discussion
Name	From	Last Reply	Replies	Closed	
<i>No Items</i>					

Copyedited			Q Search
 14013	Meutia Atika Faradilla.doc	February 6, 2026	Article Text

BUKTI SUBMISSION AND REVIEW

[midwifery] New notification from Science Midwifery ▷ Inbox x



Dr Hema Rosheny Mustafa <midwiferyofficial@gmail.com>
to me ▾

Fri, Jan 23, 3:35 PM ☆ 😊 ↶ ⋮

You have a new notification from Science Midwifery:

You have been added to a discussion titled "1st Pre-Evaluation" regarding the submission "257 Association Between Vitamin D Status and Body Composition in Adult Worker : A Cross-Sectional Analysis".

Link: <https://midwifery.iocspublisher.org/index.php/midwifery/authorDashboard/submission/2253>

Patrisia

[Science Midwifery](#)

[midwifery] New notification from Science Midwifery ▷ Inbox x



Dr Hema Rosheny Mustafa <midwiferyofficial@gmail.com>
to me ▾

Thu, Feb 5, 11:32 AM ☆ 😊 ↶ ⋮

You have a new notification from Science Midwifery:

You have been added to a discussion titled "Article goes to copyediting stage" regarding the submission "257-6 Association Between Vitamin D Status and Body Composition in Adult Worker : A Cross-Sectional Analysis".

Link: <https://midwifery.iocspublisher.org/index.php/midwifery/authorDashboard/submission/2253>

Patrisia

[Science Midwifery](#)

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE
ISSN: 2086-7689 (Print) | 2721-9453 (Online)

Secret ID: 2253

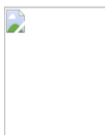
Dear Author(s),
Meutia Atika Faradilla, Deasyka Yastani, Yohana, Karina Shasri Anastasya, Nabila Maudy Salma

Warm Greetings!

It's a great pleasure to inform you that, after the peer review process, your article entitled "**Association Between Vitamin D Status and Body Composition in Adult Worker : A Cross-Sectional Analysis**" has been **ACCEPTED** and considered for publication in **Science Midwifery** in Volume 13 Issue 6, Feb (2026).

Thank you for submitting your work to this journal. We hope you submit your articles in the future.

Warm regards,



Editor,

Science Midwifery

Institute of Computer Science (IOCS)

Add: Romeby Lestari Housing Complex Blok C, No C14 Deliserdang, North Sumatra, Indonesia

[midwifery] Editor Decision » Inbox x



Juliana Batubara <midwiferyofficial@gmail.com>

to me ▾

Fri, Feb 6, 1:23 PM ☆ 😊 ↶ ⋮

Meutia Faradilla:

The editing of your submission, "257-6 Association Between Vitamin D Status and Body Composition in Adult Worker : A Cross-Sectional Analysis," is complete. We are now sending it to production.

Submission URL: <https://midwifery.iocspublisher.org/index.php/midwifery/authorDashboard/submission/2253>

Science Midwifery

ARTIKEL

<https://midwifery.iocspublisher.org/index.php/midwifery/article/view/2253>

Home / Archives / Vol. 13 No. 6 (2026): Health Sciences and related fields / Articles

Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D is associated with body fat percentage and skeletal muscle mass in adults: A cross-sectional study

Meutia Atika Faradilla

Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

Deasyka Yastani

Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

Yohana Yohana

Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

Karina Shasri Anastasya

Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

Nabila Maudy Salma

Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35335/midwifery.v13i6.2253>

Keywords: Body Composition, Body Fat, Muscle Mass, Musculoskeletal Health, Vitamin D

Abstract

Background: Vitamin D is widely recognized for its role in bone and musculoskeletal health, yet accumulating evidence suggests it may also influence body composition through regulatory effects on adipose and skeletal muscle tissues. This study aimed to evaluate the association between serum vitamin D status and body composition parameters in adults. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted in 77 adults. Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] concentrations were measured using an enzyme-linked



PDF

Published
2026-02-24

How to Cite

Faradilla, M. A. (2026) "Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D is associated with body fat percentage and skeletal muscle mass in adults: A cross-sectional study", *Science Midwifery*, 13(6), pp. 1627-1635. doi: 10.35335/midwifery.v13i6.2253.

More Citation Formats

Issue

Vol. 13 No. 6 (2026): Health Sciences and related fields



Editorial Team

Peer Review Process

Reviewer

Focus & Scope

Author Guidelines

Online Submission

Pulication Ethics

Copyright Notice

Policy of Screening for Plagiarism

Indexing

Journal Fee

Statistics View

ISSN

p-ISSN: 2086-7689 | E-ISSN: 2721-9453

TEMPLATE



TURNITIN2 MIDWIFE SCIENCE

by Meutia Faradilla

Submission date: 24-Jan-2026 10:52PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 2862657123

File name: TURNITIN_VITAMIN_D_AND_BODY_COMPOSITION.docx (119.1K)

Word count: 3424

Character count: 20305

Serum 25-Hydroxyvitamin D Is Associated with Body Fat Percentage and Skeletal Muscle Mass in Adults: A Cross-Sectional Study

ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

Background: Vitamin D is widely recognized for its role in bone and musculoskeletal health, yet accumulating evidence suggests it may also influence body composition through regulatory effects on adipose and skeletal muscle tissues. This study aimed to evaluate the association between serum vitamin D status and body composition parameters in adults. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted in 77 adults. Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] concentrations were measured using an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), while body composition (percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass) was assessed using bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA). Participants were categorized based on vitamin D status, and group comparisons as well as Pearson correlation analyses were performed. **Results:** The mean age of participants was 35.8 ± 9.6 years, and 40.2% were men. The prevalence of vitamin D deficiency (<20 ng/mL) was 36%, while 68% of participants had suboptimal vitamin D levels (deficiency or insufficiency). Individuals with vitamin D deficiency showed significantly higher body fat percentage and lower skeletal muscle mass compared with the non-deficient group ($p < 0.05$). Serum 25(OH)D was moderately inversely correlated with body fat percentage ($r = -0.41$, $p = 0.018$) and positively correlated with skeletal muscle mass ($r = 0.29$, $p = 0.012$). **Conclusion:** Lower vitamin D status was associated with increased adiposity and reduced skeletal muscle mass in adults. These findings highlight the potential importance of maintaining adequate vitamin D levels as part of strategies supporting healthier body composition. Longitudinal and interventional studies are needed to clarify causality and clinical implications.

Keyword : Body Composition, Body Fat, Muscle Mass, Musculoskeletal Health, Vitamin D

INTRODUCTION

Vitamin D deficiency represents a significant public health problem (up to 1 billion people worldwide are estimated to be affected) and the burden of disease is high, also in developing countries where rickets still occurs (Marti et al., 2024). In addition to its traditional function of calcium/phosphate metabolism and skeletal health, vitamin D has emerged as a multifaceted steroid hormone with constructive actions in distant organs such as adipocyte or muscle. This broader biological impact is justified by the fact that vitamin D receptor (VDR) signaling exists in non-skeletal tissues; suggesting a possibility that a similar, endocrine-like action mechanism may underlie metabolic and body composition regulation induced by vitamin D (Park & Han, 2021). The “vitamin D paradox” is due to a combination of indoor lifestyles, reduced UVB exposure during peak sunlight hours, air pollution and sun-avoidance behaviour (Siddiquee et al., 2021). Even though there may be abundant sunshine in much tropical country; circulating 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] levels are still low throughout much of the tropics. Similarly, the worldwide prevalence rates of overweight and obesity that have risen globally have increased attention on nutritional biomarkers potentially implicated in adiposity and lean tissue physiology (Bennour et al., 2022).

A consistent observation across epidemiological studies is the ²²inverse association between serum 25(OH)D levels and adiposity-related outcomes, including higher body fat percentage and greater central fat accumulation among individuals with low vitamin D status (Lu & Cao, 2023). Mechanistic explanations for this relationship include adipose sequestration of fat-soluble vitamin D and volumetric dilution across a larger body mass, which may lower measurable circulating 25(OH)D concentrations in individuals with excess adiposity (Szymczak-Pajor et al., 2022). Moreover, obesity has been proposed not only as a correlate but potentially a causal contributor to vitamin D deficiency through combined physiological and behavioral pathways (Angelino et al., n.d.). While the vitamin D–adiposity relationship is widely reported, evidence linking vitamin D status to skeletal muscle parameters remains less consistent, particularly among working-age adults. (Angelino et al., n.d.; Bennour et al., 2022). Skeletal muscle is a major metabolic organ responsible for glucose disposal and energy expenditure, and vitamin D signaling has been implicated in muscle cell differentiation, calcium handling, and mitochondrial bioenergetics (Angelino et al., n.d.). Experimental and translational studies suggest that VDR activity may directly influence mitochondrial function in skeletal muscle, providing biological plausibility for associations between vitamin D status and muscle-related phenotypes (Salles et al., 2022). Nevertheless, population findings differ across studies, potentially due to variations in measurement approaches, confounding by physical activity and adiposity, and the frequent use of broad lean mass estimates rather than muscle-specific indicators (Angelino et al., n.d.; Bennour et al., 2022).

Given the concurrent high prevalence of hypovitaminosis D and suboptimal body composition profiles, clarifying the relationship between vitamin D status and fat–muscle distribution in adults remains clinically and public health relevant (Zhang & Li, 2024). Notably, data from working age adults in Southeast Asia, where sunlight exposure is abundant yet vitamin D inadequacy persists, remain underrepresented in the current literature on vitamin D and body composition. Many previous studies have emphasized BMI or generalized lean mass measures, which may mask clinically meaningful variation in fat muscle distribution and its relationship with vitamin D status (Angelino et al., n.d.; Bennour et al., 2022). By integrating serum 25(OH)D assessment with bioelectrical impedance-based evaluation of percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass, the present study offers a more granular description of body composition correlates of vitamin D in adults. These findings may provide practical implications for early screening and targeted interventions aimed at reducing adiposity and preserving metabolically active muscle tissue in populations at risk of hypovitaminosis D (Al Argan et al., 2026). Therefore, this study aimed to examine the association between serum 25(OH)D concentration and body composition parameters specifically percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass in an adult population assessed using standardized biochemical and bioelectrical impedance approaches. We hypothesized that higher 25(OH)D levels would be associated with lower adiposity and greater skeletal muscle mass, supporting the potential value of vitamin D adequacy for favorable body composition in adults.

RESEARCH METHOD

A cross-sectional study was conducted to examine the association between vitamin D status and body composition in adults. A total of 77 men and women aged 20–60 years were recruited from RSUP H. Adam Malik, Medan, North Sumatera. Participants were eligible if they were apparently

healthy, had no major chronic diseases (e.g., uncontrolled diabetes, severe renal/hepatic disease, or active malignancy), and had not consumed vitamin D supplements within the previous 3 months. Exclusion criteria included pregnancy, use of medications affecting bone or mineral metabolism, and conditions that could compromise bioelectrical impedance measurements. All participants provided written informed consent. The study protocol was approved by the Universitas Sumatera Utara Ethics Committee and conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

Demographic and health information (age, sex, medical history, supplement use, and self-reported physical activity) were collected using a structured questionnaire. Body weight and height were measured using calibrated equipment, and BMI was calculated. Body composition, including percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass, was assessed using bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA). Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] was measured at Prodia Laboratory using a quantitative ELISA method. Vitamin D status was categorized as deficient (<20 ng/mL), insufficient (20–29 ng/mL), and sufficient (≥30 ng/mL). For selected comparisons, participants were grouped as vitamin D-deficient versus non-deficient (insufficient and sufficient combined).

Continuous variables were assessed for normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and presented as mean ± SD, while categorical variables were reported as frequency and percentage. Group differences between vitamin D-deficient and non-deficient participants were evaluated using independent-samples t-tests and chi-square tests, as appropriate. Associations between serum 25(OH)D and body composition parameters were examined using Pearson correlation coefficients. Statistical significance was defined as $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed), and all analyses were performed using SPSS version 26.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 77 adult patients, 31 males (40.2%) and 46 females (59.7%), mean age: 35.8 ± 9.6 years, (range: 22–58 years) were included in this study. The average values of the BMI, body fat and skeletal muscle mass were 25.1 ± 4.3 kg/m² (range: 20.8–29.4 kg/m²), 24.87 ± 5.62% (range: 15.70–36.60%) and 28.77 ± 2.56 kg (range: 19–35.10 kg) respectively among these subjects. The mean value of serum vitamin D level was 24.5 ± 9.1 ng/mL (range: 15.4–33.6 ng/mL). BMI classification showed 43 participants (55.8%) to be of normal weight, 21 (27.2%) to be overweight, seven (9.09%) obese and six (7.7%) underweight. For 28 participants (36%) the overall vitamin D level was deficient (<20 ng/mL), for 25 (32%) it was insufficient (20–29 ng/mL) and only 24 (31%) had a sufficient overall vitamin D status (≥30 ng/mL), which means that in the total study population, 68% presented with an unsatisfactory vitamin D status.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics and Body Composition (N=77)

Variable	n	Mean ± SD	Min–Max
Gender			
Man	31(40.2%)		
Women	46 (59.7%)		
Age (years)		35.8 ± 9.6	22–58
BMI (kg/m ²)		25.1 ± 4.3	20.8–29.4

Percent Body Fat (%)	24.87±5.623	15.70-36.60
Skeletal Muscle Mass (kg)	28.77 ± 2.56	19.20-35.10
Vitamin D (ng/mL)	24.5 ± 9.1	15.4-33.6

Table 2. BMI Category

BMI	n	%
Underweight (BMI<18.5)	6	7.7
Normal (BMI 18.5-24.9)	43	55.8
Overweight (BMI 25-29.9)	21	27.2
obese (BMI ≥ 30)	7	9.09

Table 3. Vitamin D Status Distribution

Vitamin D status	n	%
Deficiency (<20 ng/mL)	28	36
Insufficiency (20-29 ng/mL)	25	32
Sufficiency (≥30 ng/mL)	24	31

The current results indicate the high prevalence of vitamin D insufficiency in these adults, the majority of whom are deficient or insufficient even though their mean age is young (Siddiquee et al., 2021). This observation is consistent with another study reporting hypovitaminosis D to be still prevalent in working-age populations as a result of the lack of outdoor activity, indoor occupation or low consumption of dietary vitamin-rich products (Kelly et al., 2024). Importantly, the sample's mean BMI was classified as overweight and around one-third of participants were overweight or obese; this distribution may be of clinical interest considering that higher adiposity is often linked with lower plasma vitamin D concentrations. Data of the current study imply that vitamin D screening and targeted lifestyle interventions might be useful for obese adults with either high adiposity or suboptimal levels of vitamin D (Aris et al., 2020; Augustine et al., 2021).

Vitamin D reduction at high fat mass attaches to visceral dilution and storage of vitamin D in adipose tissue, lowering bioavailable circulating levels (Szymczak-Pajor et al., 2022), which may vary with the study design. Lastly, the contribution of vitamin D on skeletal muscle also includes - along with VDR expression in muscles tissue - its role in calcium handling and muscle protein metabolism (Pojednic & Ceglia, 2014). While the average muscle mass was preserved in relation to age, the incredibly high proportion of individuals with vitamin D insufficiency might have implications on both muscle quality and future strength and metabolic health (Bollen et al., 2022; Md Salleh et al., 2025). Of note, the inclusion of fat mass% and skeletal muscle mass in addition to BMI gives a more detailed body composition profile, effectively enhancing the evidence for assessing Vitamin D status not only according to body size but also with respect to fat muscle distribution (Magalhães et al., 2024; Sutherland et al., 2023). The average percent body fat was also significantly higher in the vitamin D deficient group ($30.2 \pm 7.8\%$) compared with the non-deficient participants ($25.6 \pm 6.5\%$, $p = 0.004$). Furthermore, the absolute skeletal muscle mass was significantly lower in Vitamin D deficient than Vitamin D non-deficient group individuals as assessed by BIA (mean 24.1 ± 5.4 kg vs 26.8 ± 5.9 kg, $p = 0.019$).

Table 3. Vitamin D Status Distribution

Body Composition Parameter	Vitamin D Deficient Group	Vitamin D Non-Deficient Group	p-value
Percent Body Fat (%)	30.2 ± 7.8	25.6 ± 6.5	0.004
Skeletal Muscle Mass (kg)	24.1 ± 5.4	26.8 ± 5.9	0.019

Table 4. Correlation Vitamin D and Body Composition Parameter

Body Composition Parameter	r	p-value
Body Fat Percentage	-0.41	0.018
Skeletal Muscle Mass	0.29	0.012

Serum 25(OH)D concentration were significantly associated with body composition parameters. There existed a significant negative correlation between 25(OH)D and percent body fat (Pearson $r = -0.41$, $p=0.018$), suggesting that those with higher vitamin D status exhibited less adiposity. Serum 25(OH)D also exhibited a positive association with skeletal muscle mass ($r = 0.29$, $p = 0.012$). These associations persisted in partial correlation analysis when adjusting for age and sex. We observed vitamin D status had a significant association with body composition in our present study. Lower serum 25(OH)D values were associated with increased body fat and decreased muscle mass, as we hypothesized (Khwanchuea & Punsawad, 2022; Latham et al., 2021). These results are in line with other studies which have recommended that vitamin D acts on both adipose and muscle tissues (Jonasson et al., 2020). A recent cross-sectional study in Korean adults also found total 25(OH)D levels to be negatively associated with percent fat mass and positively related to lean mass and muscle strength (Kim et al., 2025). Our findings support these associations in a general adult population, providing further evidence that sufficient vitamin D status is associated with a more favourable body composition profile.

The association of low vitamin D and increased adiposity is biologically feasible, and other studies reported similar findings. Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin and may be sequestered in adipose tissue, resulting in reduced circulating concentrations among overweight individuals. Hypertrophied adipocytes in obesity could serve as a storage depot for vitamin D, rendering it less bioavailable. This latter hypothesis of the sequestration theory would account for a vitamin D deficiency as a result from an increased fat mass. On the other hand, there are mechanistic reasons why vitamin D deficiency per se might lead to increased adiposity. Vitamin D receptors are expressed in adipose tissue, and the biologically active form of this vitamin (1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D), stimulates lipolysis, inhibits mature adipocytes development and also decreases fat storage (Jonasson et al., 2020). These regulatory effects are diminished in deficiency states and may therefore predispose to increased fat deposition. The inverse 25(OH)D-body fat relationship that we found overlaps both views and is consistent with conclusions of other observational studies reporting associations between low vitamin D status and increased BMI, waist girth, and central fat accumulation. It should be noted that in our data, vitamin D levels were more closely related to percent fat than BMI which emphasizes the importance of including body composition variables in addition to BMI (Campa et al., 2021; Dai et al., 2025).

In the present study, vitamin D status was related to muscle mass as well as adiposity. We observed that higher 25(OH)D levels were modestly but significantly associated with higher Skeletal Muscle Mass. This is consistent with the hypothesis that vitamin D adequacy might be good for muscle health (Latham et al., 2021; Shoemaker et al., 2022). Several pathways influence muscle function and vitamin D. Muscle fibers also have vitamin D receptors, which can be activated by calcitriol to promote muscle protein synthesis and mitochondrial function. Vitamin D has also been implicated in regulating muscle cell calcium handling, a process that is essential for muscle contraction and strength (Conzade et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2023). An additional prospective cohort study reported that older adults with 25(OH)D insufficiency were associated with higher risk of developing low muscle mass and sarcopenia in comparison to normal (Shin & Kim, 2025). Our cross-sectional findings in a younger adult cohort mirror these patterns to some extent: deficient individuals had reduced muscle mass relative to their peers. The association remained significant after adjusting for basic confounders, though it was partly attenuated by controlling for overall body size (BMI), suggesting that some of the vitamin D-muscle link might be indirect (Kim et al., 2025).

Some studies have reported sex-specific or age-specific differences in the vitamin D and muscle relationship (Shin & Kim, 2025). Men generally have higher muscle mass and possibly greater outdoor activity on average, which might amplify detectable associations in cross-sectional data (Jeong et al., 2023). Additionally, hormonal differences and vitamin D receptor expression could play a role. Age is another factor, our relatively young to middle-aged cohort might not exhibit as pronounced muscle deterioration as older populations do. Thus, the consequences of vitamin D deficiency on muscle might manifest more strongly with advancing age or in the context of sarcopenia risk (Conzade et al., 2019; Umer et al., 2025).

Our findings contribute to the ongoing discussion of whether improving vitamin D status can favorably alter body composition. While observational data consistently show associations, the causality is not fully established (Jonasson et al., 2020). It could be that people with healthier lifestyles both have better vitamin D status (through diet or sun exposure) and maintain fitter body compositions. Randomized trials of vitamin D supplementation have yielded mixed results regarding body composition outcomes. Some intervention studies demonstrate that vitamin D supplementation, especially when combined with resistance exercise or protein intake, can modestly increase lean mass or improve muscle function in deficient individuals (Ganapathy & Nieves, 2020; Martínez-Rodríguez et al., 2023). For instance, a meta-analysis indicated vitamin D supplementation alone did not significantly boost muscle mass in older adults, but combined strategies (vitamin D with exercise and nutrition) showed more promise (Fuentes-Barría et al., 2025; Zhang & Li, 2024). On the adiposity side, a few trials suggest that correcting vitamin D deficiency might aid weight loss or reduce fat mass, though results are not uniform (Chang, 2022; Dai et al., 2025; Ganapathy & Nieves, 2020; Umer et al., 2025). Given these nuances, our cross-sectional study underscores an association but cannot prove causation. Longitudinal studies are needed to see if low vitamin D precedes changes in body composition, and well-controlled trials can determine if addressing vitamin D deficiency leads to measurable improvements in muscle or fat metrics.

Strengths of our study include the use of direct measurements for both vitamin D (serum 25(OH)D via ELISA and body composition via BIA, allowing quantification of fat and muscle compartments. The study is novel in focusing on an adult population with a broad age range, contributing to literature that has often focused either on elderly cohorts or specific groups (Durak & Safer, 2025; Umer et al., 2025; Zhang & Li, 2024). However, several limitations should be noted.

First, the sample size is relatively modest, which may limit generalizability and statistical power to detect smaller effects or subgroup differences. Second, BIA, while convenient and non-invasive, is an indirect method of assessing body composition and may be less accurate than gold-standard techniques like DEXA. We mitigated this with standardized measurement conditions, but some measurement error is possible. Third, we did not measure functional outcomes such as muscle strength or physical performance, which are important aspects of body composition's impact on health. Including like handgrip strength or gait tests could strengthen future analyses, as vitamin D might relate more strongly to function than mass in some cases. Finally, as an observational cross-sectional study, we cannot infer causality or directionality. Despite these limitations, our study provides a snapshot consistent with the hypothesis that better vitamin D status aligns with healthier body composition.

CONCLUSION

Vitamin D status is significantly associated with both muscle and fat components of body composition. Vitamin D-deficient individuals showed higher adiposity and lower muscle mass relative to those with sufficient vitamin D levels. These findings support the growing evidence that adequate vitamin D may play a role in maintaining a healthier body composition, potentially through mechanisms involving fat metabolism and muscle function. From a public health and clinical perspective, addressing vitamin D deficiency in adults could confer benefits beyond bone health - potentially improving muscle mass preservation and moderating fat accumulation. However, causality remains to be established. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and randomized controlled trials to determine whether improving vitamin D status can directly lead to reductions in body fat or improvements in muscle mass and strength. In the meantime, clinicians and health practitioners should remain aware of the high prevalence of vitamin D insufficiency and consider appropriate screening and interventions, especially in populations at risk for obesity or sarcopenia. Ensuring sufficient vitamin D through safe sun exposure, diet, or supplementation could be an accessible strategy to support overall musculoskeletal health and metabolic well-being[1][5]. Ultimately, our study adds to the rationale for integrated approaches in nutrition and lifestyle that target both improved micronutrient status and healthy body composition in adults.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all participants who voluntarily took part in this study and contributed their time and cooperation throughout the data collection process. We also extend our appreciation to the clinical and administrative staff at RSUP H. Adam Malik, Medan, for their support in facilitating participant coordination and assisting in the collection of biological samples required for this research. Furthermore, we gratefully acknowledge Prodia Laboratory for conducting the laboratory analysis, particularly the measurement of serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D], and for ensuring standardized procedures and quality assurance during the examination process. Finally, we thank all colleagues and contributors who provided constructive feedback and helped improve the clarity and quality of this manuscript.

TURNITIN2 MIDWIFE SCIENCE

ORIGINALITY REPORT

19%	15%	14%	%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	www.mdpi.com Internet Source	2%
2	jrcd.eu Internet Source	1%
3	Kamelia Yaghoubi Nia, zahra Fotokian, Neda Asgarian, Samiyeh Kazemi. "The Correlation Between Serum Vitamin D and Urinary Tract Infection in Pregnant Women: A Case-Control Study from Iran", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2025 Publication	1%
4	pure.eur.nl Internet Source	1%
5	www.science.gov Internet Source	1%
6	Alyssa Scagnelli. "Beyond Metabolic Bone Disease", Veterinary Clinics of North America: Exotic Animal Practice, 2025 Publication	1%
7	Abdulbari Bener, Mariam Al-Ali, Georg F. Hoffmann. "Vitamin D deficiency in healthy children in a sunny country: associated factors", International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition, 2009 Publication	1%
8	docplayer.net Internet Source	1%

9	www.healthcare-bulletin.co.uk Internet Source	1%
10	www.researchgate.net Internet Source	1%
11	Feray Çağiran Yilmaz, Nupelda Çağiran Görgin. "The role of probiotics and dietary interventions in the treatment of periodontitis: a pilot randomized controlled clinical trial", BMC Oral Health, 2025 Publication	1%
12	vitamindwiki.com Internet Source	1%
13	Elias Chane, Bisrat Birke Teketelew, Dereje Mengesha Berta, Muluken Walle et al. "Prevalence and determinants of vitamin D deficiency among pregnant women in Gondar Town 2024: a cross-sectional study from the first and second trimesters", BMJ Open, 2025 Publication	<1%
14	healthcare-bulletin.co.uk Internet Source	<1%
15	vtechworks.lib.vt.edu Internet Source	<1%
16	www.rmmj.org.il Internet Source	<1%
17	www.peeref.com Internet Source	<1%
18	"IOF World Congress on Osteoporosis & 10th European Congress on Clinical and Economic Aspects of Osteoporosis and Osteoarthritis", Osteoporosis International, 2010 Publication	<1%

19 J. B. Matthews. "Hyperactivity and reactivity of peripheral blood neutrophils in chronic periodontitis : Neutrophil hyperactivity and reactivity in chronic periodontitis", *Clinical & Experimental Immunology*, 12/20/2006

Publication

<1 %

20 Keun-Young Shin, Kwan Kyu Park, Seong-Hwan Moon, Ick Hwan Yang, Ho-June Choi, Woo-Suk Lee. "Vitamin D deficiency adversely affects early post-operative functional outcomes after total knee arthroplasty", *Knee Surgery, Sports Traumatology, Arthroscopy*, 2016

Publication

<1 %

21 library.uerm.edu.ph

Internet Source

<1 %

22 Jennifer F Feneis. "Role of Vitamin D in Blood Pressure Homeostasis :", *American Journal of Therapeutics*, 11/2010

Publication

<1 %

23 ijkd.org

Internet Source

<1 %

24 moam.info

Internet Source

<1 %

25 www.cambridge.org

Internet Source

<1 %

26 dr.library.brocku.ca

Internet Source

<1 %

27 jamanetwork.com

Internet Source

<1 %

28 www.frontiersin.org

Internet Source

<1 %

29	eprints.soton.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %
30	mdedge-cache.qa00.mdedge.com Internet Source	<1 %
31	public-pages-files-2025.frontiersin.org Internet Source	<1 %
32	ris.utwente.nl Internet Source	<1 %
33	virologyj.biomedcentral.com Internet Source	<1 %
34	www.hindawi.com Internet Source	<1 %
35	www.jcdronline.org Internet Source	<1 %
36	Honglin Dong, Viktorija Asmolovaite, Nareen Marseal, Maryam Mearbon. "Vitamin D status and dietary intake in young university students in the UK", Nutrition & Food Science, 2021 Publication	<1 %
37	J. M. Brehm. "Serum Vitamin D Levels and Markers of Severity of Childhood Asthma in Costa Rica", American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, 05/01/2009 Publication	<1 %
38	Takafumi Osaka, Yoshitaka Hashimoto, Takuro Okamura, Takuya Fukuda, Masahiro Yamazaki, Masahide Hamaguchi, Michiaki Fukui. "Reduction of Fat to Muscle Mass Ratio Is Associated with Improvement of Liver Stiffness in Diabetic Patients with Non-	<1 %

Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease", Journal of
Clinical Medicine, 2019

Publication

39

Kahyun Kim, Hyun Sik Gong, Jihyeung Kim,
Goo Hyun Baek. "Expression of vitamin D
receptor in the subsynovial connective tissue
in women with carpal tunnel syndrome",
Journal of Hand Surgery (European Volume),
2018

Publication

<1%

Exclude quotes Off

Exclude matches Off

Exclude bibliography Off

TURNITIN2 MIDWIFE SCIENCE

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

/0

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

PAGE 4

PAGE 5

PAGE 6

PAGE 7

Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D is associated with body fat percentage and skeletal muscle mass in adults: A cross-sectional study

Meutia Atika Faradilla¹, Deasyka Yastani², Yohana³, Karina Shasri Anastasya⁴, Nabila Maudy Salma⁵

^{1,2,3}Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Trisakti, Jakarta, Indonesia

⁴Department of Nutritional, Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Trisakti, Jakarta, Indonesia

⁵Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Trisakti, Jakarta, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received Jan 8, 2026

Revised Jan 23, 2026

Accepted Feb 5, 2026

Keywords:

Body Composition

Body Fat

Muscle Mass

Musculoskeletal Health

Vitamin D

ABSTRACT

Background: Vitamin D is widely recognized for its role in bone and musculoskeletal health, yet accumulating evidence suggests it may also influence body composition through regulatory effects on adipose and skeletal muscle tissues. This study aimed to evaluate the association between serum vitamin D status and body composition parameters in adults. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted in 77 adults. Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] concentrations were measured using an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), while body composition (percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass) was assessed using bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA). Participants were categorized based on vitamin D status, and group comparisons as well as Pearson correlation analyses were performed. **Results:** The mean age of participants was 35.8 ± 9.6 years, and 40.2% were men. The prevalence of vitamin D deficiency (<20 ng/mL) was 36%, while 68% of participants had suboptimal vitamin D levels (deficiency or insufficiency). Individuals with vitamin D deficiency showed significantly higher body fat percentage and lower skeletal muscle mass compared with the non-deficient group ($p < 0.05$). Serum 25(OH)D was moderately inversely correlated with body fat percentage ($r = -0.41$, $p = 0.018$) and positively correlated with skeletal muscle mass ($r = 0.29$, $p = 0.012$). **Conclusion:** Lower vitamin D status was associated with increased adiposity and reduced skeletal muscle mass in adults. These findings highlight the potential importance of maintaining adequate vitamin D levels as part of strategies supporting healthier body composition. Longitudinal and interventional studies are needed to clarify causality and clinical implications.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](#) license.



Corresponding Author:

Meutia Atika Faradilla,

Department of Biochemistry,

Universitas Trisakti,

Jl. Kyai Tapa No.260 Kampus B, Tomang, Kec. Grogol petamburan, Kota Jakarta Barat, Daerah Khusus

Ibukota Jakarta, 11440, Indonesia

Email: meutia.atika@trisakti.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Vitamin D deficiency represents a significant public health problem (up to 1 billion people worldwide are estimated to be affected) and the burden of disease is high, also in developing countries where rickets still occurs (Marti et al., 2024). In addition to its traditional function of calcium/phosphate metabolism and skeletal health, vitamin D has emerged as a multifaceted steroid hormone with constructive actions in distant organs such as adipocyte or muscle. This broader biological impact is justified by the fact that vitamin D receptor (VDR) signaling exists in non-skeletal tissues; suggesting a possibility that a similar, endocrine-like action mechanism may underlie metabolic and body composition regulation induced by vitamin D (Park & Han, 2021). The “vitamin D paradox” is due to a combination of indoor lifestyles, reduced UVB exposure during peak sunlight hours, air pollution and sun-avoidance behaviour (Siddiquee et al., 2021). Even though there may be abundant sunshine in much tropical country; circulating 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] levels are still low throughout much of the tropics. Similarly, the worldwide prevalence rates of overweight and obesity that have risen globally have increased attention on nutritional biomarkers potentially implicated in adiposity and lean tissue physiology (Bennour et al., 2022).

A consistent observation across epidemiological studies is the inverse association between serum 25(OH)D levels and adiposity-related outcomes, including higher body fat percentage and greater central fat accumulation among individuals with low vitamin D status (Lu & Cao, 2023). Mechanistic explanations for this relationship include adipose sequestration of fat-soluble vitamin D and volumetric dilution across a larger body mass, which may lower measurable circulating 25(OH)D concentrations in individuals with excess adiposity (Szymczak-Pajor et al., 2022). Moreover, obesity has been proposed not only as a correlate but potentially a causal contributor to vitamin D deficiency through combined physiological and behavioral pathways (Angelino et al., n.d.). While the vitamin D-adiposity relationship is widely reported, evidence linking vitamin D status to skeletal muscle parameters remains less consistent, particularly among working-age adults (Angelino et al., n.d.; Bennour et al., 2022). Skeletal muscle is a major metabolic organ responsible for glucose disposal and energy expenditure, and vitamin D signaling has been implicated in muscle cell differentiation, calcium handling, and mitochondrial bioenergetics (Angelino et al., n.d.). Experimental and translational studies suggest that VDR activity may directly influence mitochondrial function in skeletal muscle, providing biological plausibility for associations between vitamin D status and muscle-related phenotypes (Salles et al., 2022). Nevertheless, population findings differ across studies, potentially due to variations in measurement approaches, confounding by physical activity and adiposity, and the frequent use of broad lean mass estimates rather than muscle-specific indicators (Angelino et al., n.d.; Bennour et al., 2022).

Given the concurrent high prevalence of hypovitaminosis D and suboptimal body composition profiles, clarifying the relationship between vitamin D status and fat-muscle distribution in adults remains clinically and public health relevant (Zhang & Li, 2024). Notably, data from working age adults in Southeast Asia, where sunlight exposure is abundant yet vitamin D inadequacy persists, remain underrepresented in the current literature on vitamin D and body composition. Many previous studies have emphasized BMI or generalized lean mass measures, which may mask clinically meaningful variation in fat muscle distribution and its relationship with vitamin D status (Angelino et al., n.d.; Bennour et al., 2022). By integrating serum 25(OH)D assessment with bioelectrical impedance-based evaluation of percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass, the present study offers a more granular description of body composition correlates of vitamin D in adults. These findings may provide practical implications for early screening and targeted interventions aimed at reducing adiposity and preserving metabolically active muscle tissue in populations at risk of hypovitaminosis D (Al Argan et al., 2026). Previous studies leave key gaps by often focusing on bone health or examining fat and muscle separately, rather than body composition as a whole. Most evidence is cross-sectional, limiting insight into causality, and

many studies use inconsistent measurement methods or overlook important factors such as age, sex, and physical activity. These gaps highlight the need for research that examines the integrated relationship between vitamin D status, fat mass, and muscle mass (Faradisa, Muhammad and Girindraswari, 2022, 2022; Madusanka *et al.*, 2023). This research contributes by broadening the understanding of vitamin D beyond bone health, showing its potential role in regulating both muscle and fat mass. The findings help clarify how micronutrient status may influence overall body composition. In practice, the study highlights the importance of monitoring and addressing vitamin D deficiency, particularly in adults at risk of obesity or muscle loss, and supports its consideration as part of simple, preventive health strategies. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the association between serum 25(OH)D concentration and body composition parameters specifically percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass in an adult population assessed using standardized biochemical and bioelectrical impedance approaches. We hypothesized that higher 25(OH)D levels would be associated with lower adiposity and greater skeletal muscle mass, supporting the potential value of vitamin D adequacy for favorable body composition in adults.

RESEARCH METHOD

A cross-sectional study was conducted to examine the association between vitamin D status and body composition in adults. A total of 77 men and women aged 20–60 years were recruited. Participants were eligible if they were apparently healthy, had no major chronic diseases (e.g., uncontrolled diabetes, severe renal/hepatic disease, or active malignancy), and had not consumed vitamin D supplements within the previous 3 months. Exclusion criteria included pregnancy, use of medications affecting bone or mineral metabolism, and conditions that could compromise bioelectrical impedance measurements. All participants provided written informed consent. The study protocol was approved by the Universitas Sumatera Utara Ethics Committee and conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

Demographic and health information (age, sex, medical history, supplement use, and self-reported physical activity) were collected using a structured questionnaire. Body weight and height were measured using calibrated equipment, and BMI was calculated. Body composition, including percent body fat and skeletal muscle mass, was assessed using bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA). Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] was measured at Prodia Laboratory using a quantitative ELISA method. Vitamin D status was categorized as deficient (<20 ng/mL), insufficient (20–29 ng/mL), and sufficient (≥30 ng/mL). For selected comparisons, participants were grouped as vitamin D-deficient versus non-deficient (insufficient and sufficient combined).

Continuous variables were assessed for normality using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and presented as mean ± SD, while categorical variables were reported as frequency and percentage. Group differences between vitamin D-deficient and non-deficient participants were evaluated using independent-samples t-tests and chi-square tests, as appropriate. Associations between serum 25(OH)D and body composition parameters were examined using Pearson correlation coefficients. Statistical significance was defined as $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed), and all analyses were performed using SPSS version 26.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 77 adult patients, 31 males (40.2%) and 46 females (59.7%), mean age: 35.8 ± 9.6 years, (range:22–58 years) were included in this study. The average values of the BMI, body fat and skeletal muscle mass were 25.1 ± 4.3 kg/m² (range:20.8–29.4 kg/m²), $24.87 \pm 5.62\%$ (range:15.70–36.60%) and 28.77 ± 2.56 kg (range:19 .20–35.10kg) respectively among these subjects., The mean value of serum vitamin D level was 24.5 ± 9.1 ng/mL (range: 15.4–33.6 ng/mL). BMI classification showed 43 participants (55.8%) to be of normal weight, 21 (27.2%) to be overweight, seven (9.09%) obese and six (7.7%) underweight. For 28 participants (36%) the overall vitamin D level was

deficient (<20 ng/mL), for 25 (32%) it was insufficient (20–29 ng/mL) and only 24 (31%) had a sufficient overall vitamin D status (≥ 30 ng/mL), which means that in the total study population, 68% presented with an unsatisfactory vitamin D status.

Table 1. Participant characteristics and body composition (N=77)

Variable	n	Mean \pm SD	Min-Max
Gender			
Man	31(40.2%)		
Women	46 (59.7%)		
Age (years)		35.8 \pm 9.6	22–58
BMI (kg/m ²)		25.1 \pm 4.3	20.8–29.4
Percent Body Fat (%)		24.87 \pm 5.623	15.70–36.60
Skeletal Muscle Mass (kg)		28.77 \pm 2.56	19.20–35.10
Vitamin D (ng/mL)		24.5 \pm 9.1	15.4–33.6

Table 2. BMI category

BMI	n	%
Underweight (BMI<18.5)	6	7.7
Normal (BMI 18.5-24.9)	43	55.8
Overweight (BMI 25-29.9)	21	27.2
obese (BMI \geq 30)	7	9.09

Table 3. Vitamin D status distribution

Vitamin D status	n	%
Deficiency (<20 ng/mL)	28	36
Insufficiency (20-29 ng/mL)	25	32
Sufficiency (≥ 30 ng/mL)	24	31

The current results indicate the high prevalence of vitamin D insufficiency in these adults, the majority of whom are deficient or insufficient even though their mean age is young (Siddiquee et al., 2021). This observation is consistent with another study reporting hypovitaminosis D to be still prevalent in working-age populations as a result of the lack of outdoor activity, indoor occupation or low consumption of dietary vitamin-rich products (Kelly et al., 2024). Importantly, the sample's mean BMI was classified as overweight and around one-third of participants were overweight or obese; this distribution may be of clinical interest considering that higher adiposity is often linked with lower plasma vitamin D concentrations. Data of the current study imply that vitamin D screening and targeted lifestyle interventions might be useful for obese adults with either high adiposity or suboptimal levels of vitamin D (Aris et al., 2020; Augustine et al., 2021).

Vitamin D reduction at high fat mass attaches to visceral dilution and storage of vitamin D in adipose tissue, lowering bioavailable circulating levels (Szymczak-Pajor et al., 2022). which may vary with the study design. Lastly, the contribution of vitamin D on skeletal muscle also includes - along with VDR expression in muscles tissue- its role in calcium handling and muscle protein metabolism (Pojednic & Ceglia, 2014). While the average muscle mass was preserved in relation to age, the incredibly high proportion of individuals with vitamin D insufficiency might have implications on both muscle quality and future strength and metabolic health (Bollen et al., 2022; Md Salleh et al., 2025). Of note, the inclusion of fat mass% and skeletal Muscle mass in addition to BMI gives a more detailed body composition profile, effectively enhancing the evidence for assessing Vitamin D status not only according to body size but also with respect to fat muscle distribution (Magalhães et al., 2024; Sutherland et al., 2023). The average percent body fat was also significantly higher in the vitamin D deficient group (30.2 \pm 7.8%) compared with the non-deficient participants (25.6 \pm 6.5%, $p = 0.004$). Furthermore, the absolute skeletal muscle mass was significantly lower in Vitamin D deficient than Vitamin D non-deficient group individuals as assessed by BIA (mean 24.1 \pm 5.4 kg vs 26.8 \pm 5.9 kg, $p = 0.019$).

Table 3. Vitamin D status distribution

Body Composition Parameter	Vitamin D		p-value
	Deficient Group	Non-Deficient Group	
Percent Body Fat (%)	30.2 ± 7.8	25.6 ± 6.5	0.004
Skeletal Muscle Mass (kg)	24.1 ± 5.4	26.8 ± 5.9	0.019

Table 4. Correlation vitamin D and body composition parameter

Body Composition Parameter	r	p-value
Body Fat Percentage	-0.41	0.018
Skeletal Muscle Mass	0.29	0.012

Serum 25(OH)D concentration were significantly associated with body composition parameters. There existed a significant negative correlation between 25(OH)D and percent body fat (Pearson $r = -0.41$, $p=0.018$), suggesting that those with higher vitamin D status exhibited less adiposity. Serum 25(OH)D also exhibited a positive association with skeletal muscle mass ($r = 0.29$, $p = 0.012$). These associations persisted in partial correlation analysis when adjusting for age and sex. We observed vitamin D status had a significant association with body composition in our present study. Lower serum 25(OH)D values were associated with increased body fat and decreased muscle mass, as we hypothesized (Khwancheua & Punsawad, 2022; Latham et al., 2021). These results are in line with other studies which have recommended that vitamin D acts on both adipose and muscle tissues (Jonasson et al., 2020). A recent cross-sectional study in Korean adults also found total 25(OH)D levels to be negatively associated with percent fat mass and positively related to lean mass and muscle strength (Kim et al., 2025). Our findings support these associations in a general adult population, providing further evidence that sufficient vitamin D status is associated with a more favourable body composition profile.

The association of low vitamin D and increased adiposity is biologically feasible, and other studies reported similar findings. Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin and may be sequestered in adipose tissue, resulting in reduced circulating concentrations among overweight individuals. Hypertrophied adipocytes in obesity could serve as a storage depot for vitamin D, rendering it less bioavailable. This latter hypothesis of the sequestration theory would account for a vitamin D deficiency as a result from an increased fat mass. On the other hand, there are mechanistic reasons why vitamin D deficiency per se might lead to increased adiposity. Vitamin D receptors are expressed in adipose tissue, and the biologically active form of this vitamin (1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D), stimulates lipolysis, inhibits mature adipocytes development and also decreases fat storage (Jonasson et al., 2020). These regulatory effects are diminished in deficiency states and may therefore predispose to increased fat deposition. The inverse 25(OH)D-body fat relationship that we found overlaps both views and is consistent with conclusions of other observational studies reporting associations between low vitamin D status and increased BMI, waist girth, and central fat accumulation. It should be noted that in our data, vitamin D levels were more closely related to percent fat than BMI which emphasizes the importance of including body composition variables in addition to BMI (Campa et al., 2021; Dai et al., 2025).

In the present study, vitamin D status was related to muscle mass as well as adiposity. We observed that higher 25(OH)D levels were modestly but significantly associated with higher Skeletal Muscle Mass. This is consistent with the hypothesis that vitamin D adequacy might be good for muscle health (Latham et al., 2021; Shoemaker et al., 2022). Several pathways influence muscle function and vitamin D. Muscle fibers also have vitamin D receptors, which can be activated by calcitriol to promote muscle protein synthesis and mitochondrial function. Vitamin D has also been implicated in regulating muscle cell calcium handling, a process that is essential for muscle contraction and strength (Conzade et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2023). An additional prospective cohort study reported that older adults with 25(OH)D insufficiency were associated with higher risk of developing low muscle mass and sarcopenia in comparison to normal (Shin & Kim, 2025). Our cross-sectional findings in a younger adult cohort mirror these patterns to some

extent: deficient individuals had reduced muscle mass relative to their peers. The association remained significant after adjusting for basic confounders, though it was partly attenuated by controlling for overall body size (BMI), suggesting that some of the vitamin D–muscle link might be indirect (Kim et al., 2025).

Some studies have reported sex-specific or age-specific differences in the vitamin D and muscle relationship (Shin & Kim, 2025). Men generally have higher muscle mass and possibly greater outdoor activity on average, which might amplify detectable associations in cross-sectional data (Jeong et al., 2023). Additionally, hormonal differences and vitamin D receptor expression could play a role. Age is another factor, our relatively young to middle-aged cohort might not exhibit as pronounced muscle deterioration as older populations do. Thus, the consequences of vitamin D deficiency on muscle might manifest more strongly with advancing age or in the context of sarcopenia risk (Conzade et al., 2019; Umer et al., 2025).

Our findings contribute to the ongoing discussion of whether improving vitamin D status can favorably alter body composition. While observational data consistently show associations, the causality is not fully established (Jonasson et al., 2020). It could be that people with healthier lifestyles both have better vitamin D status (through diet or sun exposure) and maintain fitter body compositions. Randomized trials of vitamin D supplementation have yielded mixed results regarding body composition outcomes. Some intervention studies demonstrate that vitamin D supplementation, especially when combined with resistance exercise or protein intake, can modestly increase lean mass or improve muscle function in deficient individuals (Ganapathy & Nieves, 2020; Martínez-Rodríguez et al., 2023). For instance, a meta-analysis indicated vitamin D supplementation alone did not significantly boost muscle mass in older adults, but combined strategies (vitamin D with exercise and nutrition) showed more promise (Fuentes-Barría et al., 2025; Zhang & Li, 2024). On the adiposity side, a few trials suggest that correcting vitamin D deficiency might aid weight loss or reduce fat mass, though results are not uniform (Chang, 2022; Dai et al., 2025; Ganapathy & Nieves, 2020; Umer et al., 2025). Given these nuances, our cross-sectional study underscores an association but cannot prove causation. Longitudinal studies are needed to see if low vitamin D precedes changes in body composition, and well-controlled trials can determine if addressing vitamin D deficiency leads to measurable improvements in muscle or fat metrics.

Strengths of our study include the use of direct measurements for both vitamin D (serum 25(OH)D via ELISA and body composition via BIA, allowing quantification of fat and muscle compartments. The study is novel in focusing on an adult population with a broad age range, contributing to literature that has often focused either on elderly cohorts or specific groups (Durak & Safer, 2025; Umer et al., 2025; Zhang & Li, 2024). However, several limitations should be noted. First, the sample size is relatively modest, which may limit generalizability and statistical power to detect smaller effects or subgroup differences. Second, BIA, while convenient and non-invasive, is an indirect method of assessing body composition and may be less accurate than gold-standard techniques like DEXA. We mitigated this with standardized measurement conditions, but some measurement error is possible. Third, we did not measure functional outcomes such as muscle strength or physical performance, which are important aspects of body composition's impact on health. Including like handgrip strength or gait tests could strengthen future analyses, as vitamin D might relate more strongly to function than mass in some cases. Finally, as an observational cross-sectional study, we cannot infer causality or directionality. Despite these limitations, our study provides a snapshot consistent with the hypothesis that better vitamin D status aligns with healthier body composition.

CONCLUSION

Our findings indicate that vitamin D status is closely associated with body composition, with deficient individuals tending to have higher body fat and lower muscle mass. This suggests that

adequate vitamin D may support a healthier muscle-fat balance, extending its relevance beyond bone health to broader metabolic well-being. Although causality cannot be established from this study, the results underscore the potential importance of addressing vitamin D deficiency, particularly in adults at risk of obesity or muscle loss. Future longitudinal studies and clinical trials are needed to clarify whether improving vitamin D status can directly enhance muscle mass or reduce fat accumulation. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to a more integrated understanding of vitamin D in body composition regulation and encourages further mechanistic research. Practically, the findings support the consideration of vitamin D screening and correction as part of preventive health strategies and evidence-based clinical and public health policies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all participants who voluntarily took part in this study and contributed their time and cooperation throughout the data collection process. Furthermore, we gratefully acknowledge Prodia Laboratory for conducting the laboratory analysis, and for ensuring standardized procedures and quality assurance during the examination process. Finally, we thank all colleagues and contributors who provided constructive feedback and helped improve the clarity and quality of this manuscript.

References

- Al Argan, R. J., Alqatari, S. G., Alwaheed, A. J., Hasan, M. A., AlQahtani, S. Y., Al Shubbar, M. D., Alnasser, A. H., Al Abbas, S. M., & AlYousef, N. H. (2026). Vitamin D deficiency in obesity: Epidemiological evidence, biological mechanisms, and clinical considerations. *Obesity Medicine*, 59, 100680. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obmed.2025.100680>
- Angelino, D., Godos, J., Högler, W., Kepler, J., Zhuang, Y., Wang, H., Cui, A., Zhang, T., Xiao, P., & Fan, Z. (n.d.). OPEN ACCESS EDITED BY Global and regional prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in population-based studies from to 0000: A pooled analysis of million participants participants from mm countries were eligible for this study. https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospERO/display_
- Aris, N., Mitra, A. K., Mohamed, W. M. I. B. W., Muda, W. A. M. B. W., & Mohamed, H. J. B. J. (2020). Effects of occupational sunlight exposure and monsoon season on vitamin D concentration among outdoor and indoor workers in Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Nutrition*, 26(3), 425–439. <https://doi.org/10.31246/MJN-2020-0038>
- Augustine, L. F., Nair, K. M., & Kulkarni, B. (2021). Sun exposure as a strategy for acquiring vitamin D in developing countries of tropical region. *Indian Journal of Medical Research*, 154(3), 423–432. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijmr.IJMR_1244_18
- Bennour, I., Haroun, N., Sicard, F., Mounien, L., & Landrier, J. F. (2022). Vitamin D and Obesity/Adiposity – A Brief Overview of Recent Studies. In *Nutrients* (Vol. 14, Issue 10). MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu14102049>
- Bollen, S. E., Bass, J. J., Fujita, S., Wilkinson, D., Hewison, M., & Atherton, P. J. (2022). The Vitamin D/Vitamin D receptor (VDR) axis in muscle atrophy and sarcopenia. *Cellular Signalling*, 96, 110355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cellsig.2022.110355>
- Campa, F., Toselli, S., Mazzilli, M., Gobbo, L. A., & Coratella, G. (2021). Assessment of body composition in athletes: A narrative review of available methods with special reference to quantitative and qualitative bioimpedance analysis. In *Nutrients* (Vol. 13, Issue 5). MDPI AG. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13051620>
- Chang, E. (2022). Effects of Vitamin D Supplementation on Adipose Tissue Inflammation and NF-κB/AMPK Activation in Obese Mice Fed a High-Fat Diet. *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*, 23(18). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijms231810915>
- Conzade, R., Grill, E., Bischoff-Ferrari, H. A., Ferrari, U., Horsch, A., Koenig, W., Peters, A., & Thorand, B. (2019). Vitamin D in Relation to Incident Sarcopenia and Changes in Muscle Parameters Among Older Adults: The KORA-Age Study. *Calcified Tissue International*, 105(2), 173–182. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00223-019-00558-5>

- Dai, D., Ling, Y., Xu, F., Li, H., Wang, R., Gu, Y., Xia, X., Xiong, A., Sun, R., Qiu, L., Ding, Y., Yu, Y., Cai, X., & Xie, Z. (2025). Impact of body composition on vitamin D requirements in healthy adults with vitamin D deficiency. *Frontiers in Endocrinology*, 16. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fendo.2025.1421663>
- Durak, A., & Safer, U. (2025). Association of Vitamin D Deficiency with Local Muscle–Fat Ratio in Geriatric Palliative Care Patients: An Ultrasonographic Study. *Healthcare (Switzerland)*, 13(17). <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare13172188>
- Fuentes-Barría, H., Aguilera-Eguía, R., Angarita-Davila, L., Rojas-Gómez, D., Alarcón-Rivera, M., López-Soto, O., Maureira-Sánchez, J., Bermúdez, V., Rivera-Porras, D., & Contreras-Velázquez, J. C. (2025). Vitamin D and Sarcopenia: Implications for Muscle Health. *Biomedicines*, 13(8), 1863. <https://doi.org/10.3390/biomedicines13081863>
- Ganapathy, A., & Nieves, J. W. (2020). Nutrition and sarcopenia—what do we know? In *Nutrients* (Vol. 12, Issue 6, pp. 1–25). MDPI AG. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu12061755>
- Jeong, S. M., Lee, D. H., Rezende, L. F. M., & Giovannucci, E. L. (2023). Different correlation of body mass index with body fatness and obesity-related biomarker according to age, sex and race-ethnicity. *Scientific Reports*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-30527-w>
- Jonasson, T. H., da Rocha Lemos Costa, T. M., Petterle, R. R., Moreira, C. A., & Borba, V. Z. C. (2020). Body composition in nonobese individuals according to vitamin D level. *PLoS ONE*, 15(11 November). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0241858>
- Kelly, D. C., Fan, M., Langton, R. S., & Stahlman, S. L. (2024). *Vitamin D Deficiency Trends, Risk Factors, and Occupational Risk in Active Component Service Members of the U.S. Armed Forces* (Vol. 31, Issue 8).
- Khwanchea, R., & Punsawad, C. (2022). Associations Between Body Composition, Leptin, and Vitamin D Varied by the Body Fat Percentage in Adolescents. *Frontiers in Endocrinology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fendo.2022.876231>
- Kim, S.-H., Jeong, Y., Son, S.-W., & Kim, H.-N. (2025). Differential Associations of Vitamin D Metabolites with Adiposity and Muscle-Related Phenotypes in Korean Adults: Results from KNHANES 2022-2023. *Nutrients*, 17(18). <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu17183013>
- Latham, C. M., Brightwell, C. R., Keeble, A. R., Munson, B. D., Thomas, N. T., Zagzoog, A. M., Fry, C. S., & Fry, J. L. (2021). Vitamin D Promotes Skeletal Muscle Regeneration and Mitochondrial Health. In *Frontiers in Physiology* (Vol. 12). Frontiers Media S.A. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fphys.2021.660498>
- Lu, S., & Cao, Z. B. (2023). Interplay between Vitamin D and Adipose Tissue: Implications for Adipogenesis and Adipose Tissue Function. In *Nutrients* (Vol. 15, Issue 22). Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI). <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu15224832>
- Magalhães, P. M., Cruz, S. P. da, Carneiro, O. A., Teixeira, M. T., & Ramalho, A. (2024). Vitamin D Inadequacy and Its Relation to Body Fat and Muscle Mass in Adult Women of Childbearing Age. *Nutrients*, 16(9). <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu16091267>
- Marti, D. T., Nesi, A., Balta, C., Olariu, T. R., Miha, A. G., Hermenean, A., & Oatis, D. A. (2024). Retrospective Analysis of Vitamin D Deficiency in an Adult Population of Arad County, Western Romania (2019–2022). *Life*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.3390/life14020274>
- Martínez-Rodríguez, A., Sánchez-Sánchez, J., Martínez-Olcina, M., Vicente-Martínez, M., Peñaranda-Moraga, M., Asencio-Mas, N., González-Alvarado, L., Matlosz, P., Yáñez-Sepúlveda, R., Cortés-Roco, G., & Sánchez-Sáez, J. A. (2023). Quantitative Diet, Body Composition and Sprint Performance in Female Professional Beach Handball Players. *Nutrients*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu15010138>
- Md Salleh, N. S., Nicole, L. Y. Le, Shafirudin, S. A., Ahmad, M. A., Chin, K. Y., Rajab, N. F., & Jamil, N. A. (2025). Vitamin D status and its association with muscle discomfort among Malay female indoor workers - a cross-sectional study. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-10424-0>
- Park, C. Y., & Han, S. N. (2021). The role of vitamin D in adipose tissue biology: Adipocyte differentiation, energy metabolism, and inflammation. *Journal of Lipid and Atherosclerosis*, 10(2), 130–144. <https://doi.org/10.12997/jla.2021.10.2.130>
- Pojednic, R. M., & Ceglia, L. (2014). The Emerging Biomolecular Role of Vitamin D in Skeletal Muscle. *Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews*, 42(2), 76–81. <https://doi.org/10.1249/JES.0000000000000013>
- Salles, J., Chanet, A., Guillet, C., Vaes, A. M., Brouwer-Brolsma, E. M., Rocher, C., Giraudet, C., Patrac, V., Meugnier, E., Montaurier, C., Denis, P., Le Bacquer, O., Blot, A., Jourdan, M., Luiking, Y., Furber, M., Van Dijk, M., Tardif, N., Yves Boirie, Y., & Walrand, S. (2022). Vitamin D status modulates mitochondrial oxidative capacities in skeletal muscle: role in sarcopenia. *Communications Biology*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s42003-022-04246-3>

- Shin, S., & Kim, M. J. (2025). Associations Between Vitamin D Deficiency and Sarcopenia in South Korean Adults: Based on the 2022 Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. *Nutrients*, *17*(20), 3292. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu17203292>
- Shoemaker, M. E., Salmon, O. F., Smith, C. M., Duarte-Gardea, M. O., & Cramer, J. T. (2022). Influences of Vitamin D and Iron Status on Skeletal Muscle Health: A Narrative Review. In *Nutrients* (Vol. 14, Issue 13). MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu14132717>
- Siddiquee, M. H., Bhattacharjee, B., Siddiqi, U. R., & MeshbahurRahman, M. (2021). High prevalence of vitamin D deficiency among the South Asian adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Public Health*, *21*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11888-1>
- Sutherland, J. P., Zhou, A., & Hyppönen, E. (2023). Muscle Traits, Sarcopenia, and Sarcopenic Obesity: A Vitamin D Mendelian Randomization Study. *Nutrients*, *15*(12). <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu15122703>
- Szymczak-Pajor, I., Miazek, K., Selmi, A., Balcerczyk, A., & Śliwińska, A. (2022). The Action of Vitamin D in Adipose Tissue: Is There the Link between Vitamin D Deficiency and Adipose Tissue-Related Metabolic Disorders? In *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* (Vol. 23, Issue 2). MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijms23020956>
- Umer, M., Ali Shah, S. M., Moeckel, C., Azhar, E., Aziz, F., & Waheed, A. (2025). Global Trends in Vitamin D Research From 1985 to 2024. *PRiMER*, *9*. <https://doi.org/10.22454/primer.2025.538113>
- Zhang, F., & Li, W. (2024). Vitamin D and Sarcopenia in the Senior People: A Review of Mechanisms and Comprehensive Prevention and Treatment Strategies. In *Therapeutics and Clinical Risk Management* (Vol. 20, pp. 577-595). Dove Medical Press Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.2147/TCRM.S471191>