

## Margherita Cantorna, PhD



Dr. Margherita Cantorna is a Professor in the Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences at Penn State University. She received her BS in Chemistry from the University of Illinois and her PhD at the University of Madison-Wisconsin in the Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology. For her post-doctoral fellowship, she stayed at the University of Madison, but moved to the Biochemistry Department. Her first appointment at Penn State University was in the Department of Nutrition, and she moved to her present position in 2006. The main focus of the research in Dr. Cantorna's group is to understand how the immune system senses environmental changes in the availability of vitamin D. The work in the Cantorna lab has established that vitamin D availability from either sunshine exposure or diet is an environmental factor that affects the development of the immune system, and as a consequence, the development of immune-mediated diseases. In addition, the Cantorna lab is interested in how other nutrients (vitamin A, selenium and iron) and foods (mushrooms) regulate immune function. Dr. Cantorna's research is unique in that it has contributed to the fields of physiology, biochemistry, nutrition, immunology and public policy related to vitamin D.

Dr. Cantorna has been invited to sit on numerous review panels in both nutrition and immunology. She was recently awarded the 2012 Osborne and Mendel Award by the American Society for Nutrition. In addition, she has been invited to speak at the national meetings for several different scientific societies, including most of the nutrition societies both in the US and abroad.