

# Vitamin D



Vitamin D helps with absorption of calcium and makes it available to your bone. In addition to improving bone health, vitamin D also helps muscle performance. It also improves balance and decreases risk for falls and therefore plays an important part in the treatment of osteoporosis.

## How much do you need?



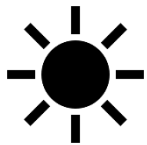
**Less than 50 years**

**400-800 IU a day**

**51 years and over**

**800-1000 IU a day**

## Sources of vitamin D: Natural



### Sunlight

Some sun exposure (for 10-15 minutes) may help especially in early spring and late fall. The amount of vitamin D you skin can produce in response to sunlight depends on skin pigmentation, age, time of day and season.

## Sources of vitamin D: Foods



<b>Fish</b>	
Swordfish (3oz)	570 iu
Salmon (3 oz)	447 iu
Canned tuna (3 oz)	154 iu
<b>Fish oil</b>	
Cod liver oil (1 tablespoon)	1360 iu
<b>Milk and dairy products</b>	
Fortified milk 2% (1 cup)	120 iu
Yogurt (6 oz)	80 iu
Swiss cheese (1 oz)	6 iu
<b>Cereal (Fortified)</b>	
	40 iu
<b>Fortified orange juice (1 cup)</b>	
	137 iu
<b>Soy, almond milk (fortified)</b>	
	120

## Sources of vitamin D: Supplements



Vitamin D2 (Ergocalciferol)

May require prescription

Vitamin D3 (Cholecalciferol)

Is more easily absorbed.

## Dosing

Most people require 800-1000 IU of vitamin D3 once a day.

In those with very low levels of vitamin D, doses of 50,000 IU once a week may be required for about six to eight weeks

- Taking more than the recommended doses does not provide benefits to bone. Vitamin D intake should not exceed 4,000 IU a day.
- Too much vitamin D can be harmful.

## Testing for vitamin D

A blood test can help measure the amount of vitamin D in your blood. Levels below 30 nmol/L are considered low and lead to weakening of your bones.

## Facts about vitamin D

Most people in the United States take less than the recommended amounts of vitamin D.

The following groups are at a higher risk –

- Older adults
- People who have limited exposure to sunlight (examples: because they are homebound, type of clothing, their job)
- Those with dark skin
- Those with low absorption of fat (examples: celiac disease, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis) and after gastric bypass surgery.