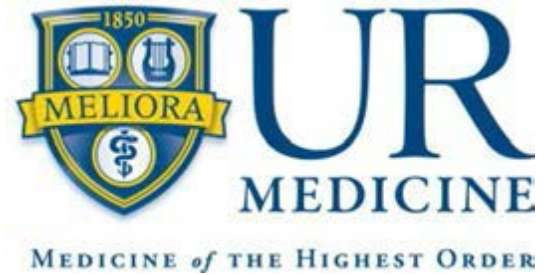


Vitamin D



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?



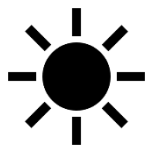
Less than 50 years

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



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