Vitamin D

What is vitamin D?
Known as the "Sunshine Vitamin," it is made in the body by sunlight on the skin. People that spend most of the time indoors must get vitamin D from artificial light or vitamin D rich diets and vitamin D pills.

Why do I need vitamin D?
Vitamin D helps bone health by promoting calcium uptake and maintaining enough calcium and phosphorus for bone growth and bone replacement. Research has also found that vitamin D helps control conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and muscle pain/weakness.

Am I at risk of vitamin D deficiency?
There is no way to know for certain until you get a vitamin D blood test. Even healthy people may have their vitamin D level tested.

You are at higher risk for vitamin D deficiency if you are or have:
- Elderly
- Have little sun exposure
- Dark skin
- Obese
- Fat malabsorption disorders
- Inflammatory bowel disease

Find out what your vitamin D level is by having a vitamin D 25 (OH) D test by your provider. If you have a vitamin D deficiency, work with your provider to increase your vitamin D level with diet, supplements and sunlight.

How do I get enough vitamin D?
- Receive midday sun exposure (without sun block) for 15-30 minutes in the late spring, summer and early fall, exposing as much skin as possible. Use common sense to prevent sun damage to skin, and avoid sun burns. Check with your provider if you have a condition or take pills that advise against sun exposure.
- Take vitamin D supplements.
- Consume foods with vitamin D.
How much vitamin D is in a supplement?
- Prescription vitamin D pill: 50,000 IU once weekly, short-term to correct vitamin deficiency
- Over the counter vitamin D pills: 400 – 5000 IU daily for maintenance
- Vitamin D3 raises blood levels of vitamin D more than vitamin D2

How much vitamin D does the sun provide?
- 20-30 minutes of sunny, mid-day, summer exposure: 10,000 IU

What are food sources of vitamin D?
There are very few food sources of vitamin D. This makes it hard to get enough from food alone. Some foods sources of vitamin D include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Source</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Vitamin D (IU)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salmon (sockeye)</td>
<td>3oz cooked</td>
<td>794 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portabella mushrooms, exposed to ultraviolet light</td>
<td>½ cup chopped</td>
<td>488 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackerel</td>
<td>3oz cooked</td>
<td>388 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White mushrooms, exposed to ultraviolet light</td>
<td>½ cup chopped</td>
<td>366 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, canned in water</td>
<td>3oz</td>
<td>154 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk with vitamin D</td>
<td>8oz</td>
<td>115-124 IU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fortified orange juice</td>
<td>8oz</td>
<td>100 IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt with vitamin D</td>
<td>6oz</td>
<td>80 IU</td>
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