

Vitamin D

The importance of vitamin D for healthy aging

Why do we need Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps the body in many ways. Calcium needs vitamin D to be used by the body, specifically to make bones strong. Consuming adequate amounts of vitamin D helps to delay or prevent osteoporosis, and decreases the risk of falls and broken bones.

Sources

The body makes vitamin D when the skin is exposed to sun rays. About 15 minutes of unprotected sun exposure per day is recommended to meet the daily requirement. Older adults are not as efficient at making vitamin D in their skin and food or supplemental sources are needed.

Fact: Sunscreens of 8 SPF or higher, glass windows, and clothing can decrease the body's production by 95-98%.

Caution: The sun's rays can be harmful to the skin. Avoid exceeding 15 minutes per day of unprotected exposure. Apply sunscreen for any extended periods spent outside.

Food sources of vitamin D:

- Fish and fish liver oils
- Milk and other fortified products
- Egg Yolks, mushrooms and beef liver
- Adults aged 50+ are recommended to take a multivitamin of vitamin D and calcium to help meet the daily requirements

Recommended Daily Intake

Vitamin D is measured in two types of units: $\mu\text{g}/\text{day}$ or IU (International Units)

Men & Women (51-70):
10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{day}$ or 400 IU per day

Men & Women (70+):
15 $\mu\text{g}/\text{day}$ or 600 IU per day

Caution: You can get too much of a good thing. Taking more than 50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{day}$ (2000 IU) can be toxic.