

A focus on Vitamin D

A healthy diet

Vitamin D is not only found in food but also is made in your body after exposure to ultraviolet rays from the sun. Vitamin D plays several key roles in your body's health:

- Regulates the calcium and phosphorus levels in your blood
- Promotes development of healthy bones and teeth
- Supports strong muscles
- Slows the rate of bone loss associated with aging
- Helps protect your heart
- Helps regulate your immune system to fight infection
- Helps ward off tumors

Exposure to the sun for 10-15 minutes two times a week should provide sufficient Vitamin D. It is hard to get sufficient amounts of Vitamin D from your diet because there are only a few foods that are good sources of Vitamin D: Salmon (360 IU in 3.5oz), tuna (200 IU in one can), sardines (250 IU in 1.75oz), reduced fat milk fortified with Vitamin D (98 IU in 1 cup), and Vitamin D fortified cereals (40 IU in 1 cup).

In some cases, individuals may need to take Vitamin D supplements. For example, postmenopausal women at risk for osteoporosis, people who do not get adequate sun exposure, or those with a medical condition that prevents adequate absorption of fat in the diet, such as inflammatory bowel disease, may need extra Vitamin D. In all cases, nobody should exceed 2,000 IU per day. Consult your physician to determine if Vitamin D blood levels should be checked or if supplementation is recommended.

For more information about healthy diets and vitamin D, contact your health care provider, your Concentra health specialist, or visit the National Institutes of Health's Web site at: www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002405.htm



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