

## **Vitamin D**

Vitamin D can be found in small amounts in a few foods, including fatty fish such as herring, mackerel, sardines and tuna. Vitamin D can also be found in dairy products and juices that are said to be "fortified with Vitamin D." With that being said, 80-90% of Vitamin D that your body receives is obtained from exposure to sunlight.

Vitamin D is also involved in the regulation of the levels of Calcium in the body. It helps improve the absorption of Calcium, and is typically found in combination with Calcium supplements. Due to this fact, Vitamin D is used for treating weak bones (osteoporosis), bone pain, and bone loss in people with a condition called hyperparathyroidism.

Sun exposure is the most reliable way to get Vitamin D. To get adequate Vitamin D it is recommended to get sunlight 2-3 times a week for about one-fourth of the time it would take to develop a mild sunburn. Obviously, this creates a problem for people living in the northern half of the United States like us Michiganders during the winter. We know that 6 days of casual sunlight exposure can make up for about 50 days of no sunlight, but this is not enough for some people to make it all the way through a long Michigan winter.

The dosage of Vitamin D varies depending of which organization is giving the recommendation. But The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends 400 IU to 800 IU daily for adults under age 50, and 800 IU to 1000 IU daily for older adults. For more information about osteoporosis visit The National Osteoporosis Foundation's website at <http://nof.org/>

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