

VITAMIN D FACT SHEET

WHAT IS VITAMIN D?

Did you know? Vitamin D is not a vitamin but actually a hormone. It targets over 2000 genes (10% of the human genome.) and strengthens bones, muscles and teeth.

WHY DO WE NEED VITAMIN D?

Vitamin D does much more than build strong bones though. Growing evidences suggest that it also helps boost our immune system, reduce inflammation, and maintain muscle strength. Some studies suggest that vitamin D may help in the prevention of several chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, hypertension, arthritis, heart diseases and even infectious diseases such as influenza.



VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

Vitamin D deficiency is a major factor in 17 varieties of cancer. It is also a factor in heart disease, stroke, hypertension, autoimmune disease, diabetes, depression, chronic pain, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, muscle weakness, muscle wasting, birth defects, and periodontal disease. Sensible exposure to the sun is the simplest and easiest way to increase your Vitamin D level. Keep in mind though, sunblock and windows block out over 95% of those valuable rays. Just 15 to 20 minutes of midday sunshine 3 to 5 times per week will get most people the proper amount of Vitamin D. (Wintertime sunshine, however, does not give enough UVB rays to increase Vitamin D.)

RECOMMENDED DAILY INTAKE OF VITAMIN D

For a person who avoids sunlight, research shows most adults should take 5000 IUs per day. The cost of Vitamin D supplements is around \$5 per month—you can't beat that for cost-effective healthcare. If you supplement, make sure to take Vitamin D3, not vitamin D2.

TESTING

There are two ways you can get tested for your Vitamin D level. One way is a home test 25-hydroxyvitaminD test or 25(OH)D. Order your test through the Vitamin D council at www.vitaminDcouncil.org. A second way is a lab test administered by your doctor. Be sure to request the 25-hydroxyvitaminD test, not the 1.25-dihydroxy-Vitamin D. Check with your insurance company—some insurance plans cover these tests.

“Vitamin D deficiency is an unrecognized, emerging cardiovascular risk factor, which should be screened for and treated. Vitamin D is easy to assess and supplementation is simple safe and effective.”

- James H Okeefe MD

*Cardiologist and Director of Preventative Cardiology
Mid America Heart Institute, Kansas City, Missouri*

“We estimate Vitamin D deficiency is the most common medical condition in the world.”

-Dr. Michael F. Holick