



## THE FACTS ABOUT VITAMIN D

- Humans need vitamin D to stay healthy.
- Vitamin D promotes strong bones and muscles.
- Many Americans do not get enough vitamin D through their diet alone.
- Vitamin D is made in the body when the skin is exposed to sunlight.
- A lack of Vitamin D can cause rickets in children and osteoporosis in adults.
- Risk of certain illnesses may be linked to both low levels and very high levels of vitamin D in the body.



## THE VITAMIN D DILEMMA

- While sunlight helps the body make vitamin D, too much sun causes skin cancer.
- Getting enough vitamin D to stay healthy without putting yourself at risk for skin cancer is not always easy.
- We are all so different that it's hard to give general advice on how much sun is enough for everyone.
- A diet rich in vitamin D and a few minutes outside each day, are usually enough for most people.



## WHO IS AT RISK

Some people are at higher risk of having low vitamin D than others. These include:

- People over 50 years old.
- People who can't leave the house or those who spend no time outside.
- Those who cover almost all their skin for personal, religious or cultural reasons.
- People with naturally dark skin.
- People who are overweight.
- Those who live in Northern areas like Alaska, New England and Canada.

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT YOUR VITAMIN D

If you're concerned about whether you're getting enough vitamin D:

- Have your blood tested for vitamin D levels by your primary healthcare provider.
- If your vitamin D level is low, you can take a supplement. Ask your healthcare provider what dosage is right for you. Also, eat foods rich in vitamin D.



### VITAMIN D SOURCES

- Fatty fish like salmon and tuna, and fish oils
- Beef liver
- Egg yolks
- Cheese
- Fortified milk, orange juice, yogurt and cereals

## VITAMIN D RECOMMENDATIONS

| Life Stage Group                    | Calcium                                |  |                             | Vitamin D                              |  |                             |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|
|                                     | Estimated Average Requirement (mg/day) | Recommended Dietary Allowance (mg/day) | Upper Level Intake (mg/day) | Estimated Average Requirement (IU/day) | Recommended Dietary Allowance (IU/day) | Upper Level Intake (IU/day) |
| Infants 0 to 6 months               | *                                      | *                                      | 1,000                       | **                                     | **                                     | 1,000                       |
| Infants 6 to 12 months              | *                                      | *                                      | 1,500                       | **                                     | **                                     | 1,500                       |
| 1-3 years old                       | 500                                    | 700                                    | 2,500                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 2,500                       |
| 4-8 years old                       | 800                                    | 1,000                                  | 2,500                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 3,000                       |
| 9-13 years old                      | 1,100                                  | 1,300                                  | 3,000                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |
| 14-18 years old                     | 1,100                                  | 1,300                                  | 3,000                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |
| 19-30 years old                     | 800                                    | 1,000                                  | 2,500                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |
| 31-50 years old                     | 800                                    | 1,000                                  | 2,500                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |
| 51-70 year old males                | 800                                    | 1,000                                  | 2,000                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |
| 51-70 year old females              | 1,000                                  | 1,200                                  | 2,000                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |
| >70 years old                       | 1,000                                  | 1,200                                  | 2,000                       | 400                                    | 800                                    | 4,000                       |
| 14-18 years old, pregnant/lactating | 1,100                                  | 1,300                                  | 3,000                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |
| 19-50 years old, pregnant/lactating | 800                                    | 1,000                                  | 2,500                       | 400                                    | 600                                    | 4,000                       |

\*For infants, Adequate Intake is 200 mg/day for 0 to 6 months of age and 260 mg/day for 6 to 12 months of age.  
\*\*For infants, Adequate Intake is 400 IU/day for 0 to 6 months of age and 400 IU/day for 6 to 12 months of age.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Office of Dietary Supplements  
(301) 435-2920 or [www.ods.od.nih.gov](http://www.ods.od.nih.gov)

Institute of Medicine of the National Academies  
(202) 334-2352 or [www.iom.edu](http://www.iom.edu)



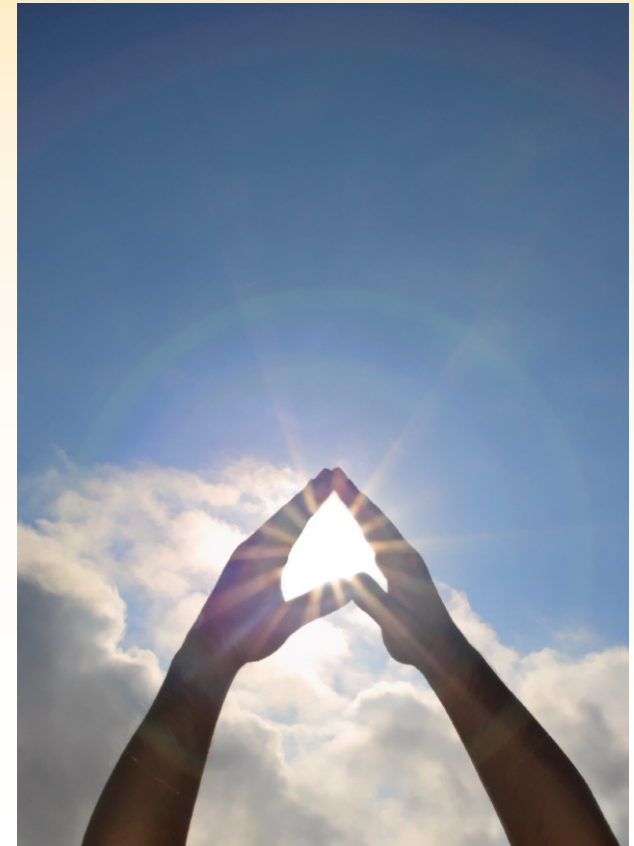
### Skin Cancer Institute

[www.arizonacancercenter.org](http://www.arizonacancercenter.org)  
A National Cancer Institute-designated  
Comprehensive Cancer Center at  
The University of Arizona College of Medicine

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# Vitamin D & the Sun



## What you need to know



### Skin Cancer Institute