

Adequate Intakes for Vitamin D

The amount of vitamin D that you need depends on your age, gender and overall health. The table below provides a general guideline for most healthy people.

Age	Children	Men	Women	Pregnancy	Lactation
Birth to 13 years	200 (IU)*				
14-18 years		200 IU	200 IU	200 IU	200 IU
19-50 years		200 IU	200 IU	200 IU	200 IU
51-70 years		400 IU	400 IU		
71+ years		600 IU	600 IU		

*based on assumption that vitamin D is not synthesized through exposure by sunlight

*international units (IU)

Sources of Vitamin D

Vitamin D comes in two main forms: vitamin D2 and D3. Both forms can raise vitamin D levels in the body. Vitamin D2 is found mostly in plant foods, while vitamin D3 is found in animal foods and is made by the body after sun exposure. You can get vitamin D from food, supplements and sunlight. In northern climates, exposing your skin to direct sunlight for about 10-15 minutes will usually help your body make enough vitamin D. However in the winter when there isn't much sunlight, you may need to get your vitamin D from food and supplements.

Food Sources	Amount of Vitamin D3 (IU)
Cod liver oil, 1 tablespoon	1360
Salmon, fresh, 3 oz.	794
<i>* Vitamin content varies depending on whether the fish is wild, farm raised or canned</i>	
Mackerel, cooked, 3 oz	388
Tuna fish, canned in water, drained, 3 oz.	154
Milk, vitamin D fortified, 1 cup	115-124
Breakfast cereals, fortified, 1 cup	100
Orange juice, vitamin D fortified, 1 cup	100
Yogurt, fortified, 6 oz.	80
Margarine, fortified, 1 tablespoon	60
Sardines, canned in oil, drained, 2	46
Egg, 1 whole	25
Cheese, Swiss, 1 ounce	6

Supplements

If you don't eat fish or dairy foods, you may need to take a vitamin D supplement. Multivitamins usually contain about 400 IU of vitamin D. You can also take a separate vitamin D supplement. Talk to your healthcare provider about the best type of supplement for you as well as how much to take.

For those with certain health conditions or if you have increased needs for Vitamin D, a prescription dose may be necessary. Your healthcare provider will talk to you about this. Do not take large amounts of vitamin D without first checking with your provider.