

IS YOUR FAMILY GETTING ENOUGH VITAMIN D?

Better Nutrition for a Brighter Future

CONTACT US

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West Virginia WIC Program

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VITAMIN D THE SUNSHINE VITAMIN





WHY DOES MY FAMILY NEED VITAMIN D?

Doctors have known for years that no one can make strong bones without vitamin D. Soft or weak bones may occur in children with low Vitamin D intake.

Current research suggests that vitamin D may also:

- Improve your immune system
- Lower blood pressure
- Lower the risk for type 1 and 2 diabetes
- Reduce the risk of some cancers

WHAT ABOUT SUNSHINE?

In West Virginia, there's enough sun to create our own vitamin D in the summer months, if your family is outside, without sunscreen, for a few minutes between 10 am and 3 pm. However, you take a chance on getting sunburned, which can lead to skin cancer.

Even in summer, two things can affect how well your body makes vitamin D.

- 1 Sunscreen helps prevent sunburn and skin cancer, but it also prevents your skin from making vitamin D.
- 2 Skin color acts like sunscreen. If you are very pale, you can make enough vitamin D in about 15 minutes, but if you are very dark, it may take up to 45 minutes. Regardless of skin color, in fall, winter and spring most people cannot make enough vitamin D from being in the sun.

HOW MUCH VITAMIN D DOES MY FAMILY NEED?

Family members differ in how much vitamin D they need each day.

Infants to 12 months – 400 IU
Everyone 1-70 years – 600 IU
Over age 70 years – 800 IU

The American Academy of Pediatrics and Institute of Medicine recommends a supplement of 400 IU per day for infants. Breastfeeding mothers are encouraged to speak to their doctor about supplementation for the baby.

Since few foods contain vitamin D, your health care provider may recommend a supplement for you and your family members.

FOOD SOURCES OF VITAMIN D

Canned salmon	465 IU	3 oz
Canned tuna	229 IU	3 oz
Milk	101 IU	8 oz
Yogurt	86 IU	8 oz
Dry cereal, ready-to-eat	40 IU (or more)	¾-1 cup
Egg, hard boiled	44 IU	1