

DOOR STEP NUTRITION



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The Sunshine Vitamin



Vitamin D is known as the Sunshine Vitamin because UV rays from the sun trigger our bodies to make vitamin D when they hit our skin. It takes 15-30 minutes of sun exposure, with most of our skin exposed, in order for our bodies to create the amount of vitamin D that we need. The lighter your skin, the less time you need to expose it to sunlight in order to produce adequate amounts of vitamin D. Because we live in a northern location, the sun's rays are not strong enough most of the year and many of us are deficient in vitamin D. Older adults are at an increased risk for being deficient because as we age, skin does not create vitamin D as efficiently.

Vitamin D promotes calcium absorption which is needed for bone growth and may help to prevent osteoporosis. It helps maintain healthy nervous and muscular systems and may reduce inflammation in the body. New research shows that vitamin D may prevent cancer, increase immunity, and play a beneficial role in diabetes.

Vitamin D is naturally present in very few foods so most people obtain vitamin D through supplementation or fortified foods. Some of the foods it is found in include salmon, tuna, fortified cereal, fortified milk, eggs, liver and cod liver oil.

Vitamin D is found in two forms, D2 and D3. D2 is the form synthesized by plants. D3 is the form that our bodies produce. Both forms are beneficial but D3 is the form that is most recommended because it is closest to what is already found in the body.

Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for Vitamin D:

Age	Male	Female
51-70	600 IU (15 mcg)	600 IU (15 mcg)
>70	800 IU (20 mcg)	800 IU (20 mcg)

Source: WebMD, Nutrition411, <http://ods.od.nih.gov>

What is Iron Deficiency Anemia?

Iron deficiency anemia is a common type of anemia — a condition in which blood lacks adequate healthy red blood cells. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's tissues. As the name implies, iron deficiency anemia is due to insufficient iron.

Symptoms of iron deficiency anemia include fatigue, weakness, dizziness, irritability, numbness, and trouble breathing.

If you have iron-deficiency anemia, try including more iron rich foods into your diet.

Red Meat (especially liver)	Poultry	
Beans	Dried Fruit	Pork
Seafood	Pumpkin	
Iron fortified breads, cereals, pastas		
Dark Leafy Greens		

Including foods rich in vitamin C on a daily basis may help your body absorb iron more efficiently.

Bell Peppers	Citrus	Broccoli
Kiwi	Tomatoes	Berries
Cauliflower	Dark Leafy Greens	

If left untreated, iron deficiency anemia can lead to poor balance, heart trouble, depression, loss of memory, and loss of energy.

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Please note that the information contained in this newsletter is to provide readers with health and diet information, but is not intended to be used as medical advice for individual health problems.

