

Optimizing Vitamin D Levels

Vitamin D can be obtained from three sources: food, ultraviolet light (sun and UV lamps), and supplements. Since each person’s vitamin D is affected differently by sunlight, nutrient absorption from food and supplements, and mobilized body stores, there is no one-size-fits-all guideline.

FOOD SOURCES OF VITAMIN D

| Food (3.5 oz. unless otherwise specified) | IU per serving |
|---|----------------|
| High-vitamin cod liver oil (1/2 tsp.) | 2,000 |
| Indo-Pacific marlin | 1,400 |
| Herring | 1,100 |
| Fatty bluefin tuna | 720 |
| Duck egg | 720 |
| Chicken egg (pastured) | 480-720 |
| Rainbow trout | 600 |
| Eel | 200-560 |
| Mackerel | 345-440 |
| Standard cod liver oil (1 tsp.) | 400 |
| Sockeye salmon | 360 |
| Canned sardines | 270 |
| Chicken egg (conventional) | 120 |
| Pork liver | 50 |
| Beef liver | 13.5 |
| Chicken liver | 30 |
| Pork | 28 |

SUN EXPOSURE

- As a general rule, mid-summer full-body skin exposure produces 10,000 IU in about half the time it takes your skin to turn pink. This could be just 15 minutes for pale skin types.
- At higher elevations, for darker skin colors, or with less skin exposed, much less vitamin D is produced.

RECOMMENDED SUN EXPOSURE BY SEASON

- **Late fall, winter, and early spring:** Spend about half as much time as it takes for skin to turn pink outside three to seven times per week.
- **Late spring, summer, and early fall:** Spend half as much time as it takes for skin to turn pink outside at least three times per week.

SUPPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Take with fat for maximum absorption.
- D3 is better absorbed than D2.
- Your dose should be adjusted according to your weight.
- Weekly or daily dosing is similarly effective.
 - Avoid monthly or semi-annual mega-doses.