

The following information on Vitamin D was obtained from the MAYOCLINIC.COM

What is Vitamin D?

The term "vitamin D" refers to several different forms of this vitamin. Two forms are important:

- ergocalciferol (vitamin D2) Vitamin D2 is synthesized by plants
- cholecalciferol (vitamin D3) Vitamin D3 is synthesized by humans in the skin when it is exposed to ultraviolet-B (UVB) rays from sunlight.
- Foods may be fortified with vitamin D2 or D3.

What is the major biologic function of vitamin D?

- maintains normal blood levels of calcium and phosphorus.
- Vitamin D aids in the absorption of calcium, helping to form and maintain strong bones.
- Recently, research also suggests vitamin D may provide protection from osteoporosis, hypertension (high blood pressure), cancer, and several autoimmune diseases.
- Rickets and osteomalacia are classic vitamin D deficiency diseases.
- In children, vitamin D deficiency causes rickets, which results in skeletal deformities.
- In adults, vitamin D deficiency can lead to osteomalacia, which results in muscular weakness in addition to weak bones.

What foods contain Vitamin D and how do I get it?

- fish, eggs, fortified milk, and cod liver oil.
- supplementation is recommended
- The sun also contributes significantly to the daily production of vitamin D, and as little as 10 minutes of exposure is thought to be enough to prevent deficiencies.

Who is HIGH RISK for vitamin D deficiencies?

- the elderly
- the obese
- those who have limited sun exposure
- individuals who have fat malabsorption syndromes (e.g., cystic fibrosis) or inflammatory bowel disease (e.g., Crohn's disease)
- exclusively breastfed infants

http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/vitamin-d/ns_patient-vitamind