

## Building and Keeping Strong Bones: Achieving Healthy Levels of Vitamin D

### How much Vitamin D do I need?

Vitamin D is naturally produced in the human skin in response to sunlight. With enough of the right kind of sunlight (UVB, the type that can cause sunburn), vitamin D supplements may not be necessary. However, latitude, time of year and air pollution all affect the amount of UVB sunlight available. For example, in Seattle, latitude 47 degrees N, exposure to sunlight between October and April will not generate any vitamin D production at all. Skin age, dark pigmentation, clothing and sunscreen can also result in low levels. As a consequence of many of these factors, vitamin D dietary supplements are often necessary.

In the absence of adequate UVB sunlight, the following dietary supplements are recommended:

Population Group	Recommended Daily Allowance*
Birth to 11 months	400 IU
Age 1 to 70	600 IU
Age 70 and over	800 IU
Homebound/institutionalized adults	800 IU

\*Source: 2010 Institute of Medicine National Academy of Science, Food and Nutrition Board.

There are few natural food sources of vitamin D. There is usually plenty of vitamin D in a multivitamin and some calcium supplements also include vitamin D— just check the label. Multivitamins and some calcium supplements may contain vitamin D. In some countries dairy products are supplemented with vitamin D. Check the labels for the amounts.