

VITAMIN D

The Sunshine Vitamin. Most people get some of their vitamin D intake through sun exposure, but this is dependent upon season, time of day, length of day, cloud cover, smog, skin color, and sunscreen use.

Vitamin D is Key to Health. Available in few food sources (primarily fish), vitamin D plays an important role in bone health, as well as in immune, nerve, and muscle function. In addition, it may play a role in protecting against cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, autoimmune diseases, and depression.

How Many Micrograms (mcg) of Vitamin D Do You Need Every Day?

Infants	Children	Adults	Adults	During Pregnancy and Lactation
0-16 mo.	1-8 years	9-70 years	71+	
10 mcg	15 mcg	15 mcg	20 mcg	15 mcg

Source: RDA, Dietary Reference Intakes, Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, National Academies

Meeting Your Vitamin D Needs



Reach for fortified products. Many foods may be fortified with vitamin D—the primary source in US diets—including milk and milk alternatives, cereals, orange juice, yogurt, and mushrooms with vitamin D.



Get a bi-weekly dose of sunshine. Aim for 5–30 minutes of sun exposure between 10 am and 3 pm twice a week to the face, arms, legs, or back without sunscreen to boost vitamin D intake.



Consider vitamin D supplements. Vegans may be at greater risk for low vitamin D intake. If diet intake and sun exposure fall short, vegans may need to supplement with vitamin D to meet recommended levels. Remember to discuss all dietary supplements with your health care provider. It's important to note that many supplements with vitamin D-3 (cholecalciferol) are of animal origin (lanolin); vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol) is produced from yeast and is acceptable to vegans.

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Vegan Sources of Vitamin D



Maitake Mushrooms*
(Hen of the Woods)
Serving: 1 cup, sliced
Vitamin D: 20 mcg



Portabella Mushrooms*
Serving: 1 cup, sliced
Vitamin D: 16 mcg



Chanterelle Mushrooms,
raw*
Serving: 1 cup, sliced
Vitamin D: 3 mcg



Orange Juice, fortified
with 15% of vitamin D
Serving: 1 cup
Vitamin D: 3 mcg**



Almond Milk, original,
fortified with vitamin D
Serving: 1 cup
Vitamin D: 3 mcg**



Soy Milk, original, fortified
with vitamin D
Serving: 1 cup
Vitamin D: 3 mcg**



Soy Yogurt, fortified with
vitamin D
Serving: 150 grams
Vitamin D: 2 mcg**



Breakfast Cereal, fortified
with 10% vitamin D***
Serving: ¾-1 cup
Vitamin D: 2 mcg**

Vegetarian Sources of Vitamin D



Milk, lowfat, fortified with
vitamin D
Serving: 1 cup
Vitamin D: 3 mcg



Yogurt, fortified with 10%
DV for vitamin D***
Serving: 1 cup
Vitamin D: 2 mcg



Eggs
Serving: 1 whole, large
Vitamin D: 1 mcg

* Exposing mushrooms to UV light causes measurable increases in vitamin D2 content; amount will vary depending on type of light and duration of exposure.

** May vary depending on product

*** DV = Daily Value. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) developed DVs to help consumers compare nutrient contents of products within the context of a total diet. The DV for vitamin D used here is 20 mcg for adults and children over 4 years old. Based on the updated Nutrition and Supplement Facts labels (Docket No. FDA-2012-N-1210).

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, FoodData Central. Available from <https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/>.