



Vitamin D for Your Family

Vitamin D promotes strong bones and teeth by helping your body absorb calcium. Calcium is needed for the development of healthy bones, muscles and teeth. It also prevents soft and weakened bones in children and the loss of bone density in adults. Vitamin D may help prevent infections, heart disease, cancer and diabetes as well.

How much vitamin D do you need each day?

- Children from birth to 18 years need 400 to 600 International Units (IU) of vitamin D.
- Adults, including pregnant and breastfeeding moms, need 600 IU of vitamin D.
- However, these are only recommendations and your health-care provider may suggest taking more vitamin D than the amounts above.

Where do you get vitamin D?

Your body can make some vitamin D by being out in the sun. But sunlight is not a reliable source in North Dakota except in the summer months. Also, when you use sunscreen to protect against skin cancer, it blocks your body from making vitamin D.

Very few foods contain vitamin D. The main food sources of vitamin D come from fatty fish like tuna or salmon, and fortified foods such as milk and cereal. Other dairy products such as cheese and ice cream are not fortified. Some orange juices, yogurt and other foods have vitamin D added. Check the label.

How can you get enough vitamin D each day?

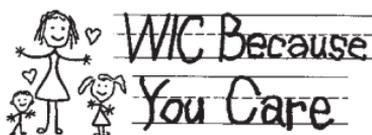
Most people are not able to get the recommended amount of vitamin D from food and need to take a supplement.

You can purchase vitamin D in these forms:

- 1) Liquid drops (Be sure to use the dropper that comes with the drops.)
- 2) Chewable tablets or gummies
- 3) Pills

Always read the supplement label and follow the directions. If you have questions about taking vitamin D supplements, talk to your health-care provider or pharmacist.

Adapted with permission from the Oregon WIC Program.



North Dakota WIC Nutrition Program
North Dakota Department of Health
600 E. Boulevard Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58505-0200
800.472.2286

