



In case you're wondering: Why is Vitamin D Important?

Answer: New research studies have shown that vitamin D is important in the prevention of osteoporosis, cancer, heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, and even multiple sclerosis.

Sunlight & Vitamin D

The best way to get vitamin D is from your skin being exposed to the UV-B rays in normal sunlight. Vitamin D from sunlight acts as a pro-hormone, rapidly converting into 25-hydroxyvitamin D, or vitamin D3.

Avoid Sunburn

Although the sun contributes significantly to the daily production of vitamin D, it is important to stress that you should never get sunburned. As little as 10 minutes of exposure is thought to be enough to prevent deficiencies. Implement sun exposure very gradually and do not over do it. Sunburn has been clearly related to an increased risk of skin cancer.



Sun in the Northwest

The amount of sunlight reaching most of us living in the Northwest is only sufficient to generate a healthy vitamin D response less than one-fourth of the year. For those times of the year when access to the proper amount of sun is not possible, you may want to consider using a vitamin D supplement.

Vitamin D Supplements

There are two types of vitamin D supplements: vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol), and vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol). Foods may be fortified with vitamin D2 or D3, but vitamin D2 supplements can be toxic at high doses and are not recommended.

Vitamin D in Food

Vitamin D is found in many dietary sources such as fish, eggs, fortified milk, and cod liver oil.

Check Your Vitamin D Level

Wondering what your vitamin D level is? There's an easy way to find out: **Every Friday from 8:00 a.m. to Noon we offer screenings for cholesterol, diabetes and vitamin D levels.** No appointment is necessary, just come to the Front Desk. A cholesterol and diabetes screening is \$19 and requires a 12-hour fast, water and medications are okay; vitamin D screening is \$35 and does not require fasting. Results from all screenings are mailed to you and/or your physician.

Need more information? Please contact Wellness 360 at United General Hospital, (360) 856-7245 or send an email to: wellness360@unitedgeneral.org.