ARIZONA CENTER FOR
Integrative Medicine
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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Vitamin D

WHAT IS IT?

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that works in concert with numerous vitamins, minerals and hormones to promote optimal bone health. Vitamin D is not only crucial for bones but also our immune, cardiovascular and neurological systems. Sun exposure is the way humans have historically obtained their vitamin D but recent studies suggest that many of us don't get enough sun to maintain adequate vitamin D levels. Deficiency is more widespread than originally thought.

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER TAKING THIS?

Your health care provider might recommend vitamin D supplements if you are at high risk, or have, any of the following:

- ❑ Osteoporosis
- ❑ Cancer
- ❑ Autoimmune conditions
- ❑ Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease

You may be at higher risk for inadequate vitamin D levels if you:

- ❑ Live in a climate with limited sunlight
- ❑ Have dark skin pigmentation
- ❑ Are lactose-intolerance or vegan
- ❑ Have a disease that impairs fat absorption (e.g., Crohn's, cystic fibrosis)
- ❑ Are pregnant or breastfeeding

HOW DO I TAKE IT?

Two forms of vitamin D exist. Vitamin D3 is generally thought to be superior to vitamin D2, though some experts believe they are roughly equivalent. Vitamin D2 is made from yeast and is preferred by vegans. Vitamin D3 is generally made from lanolin, though some companies use fish oil. Vitamin D should be taken at mealtime to enhance absorption.

DOSE: Below are the current recommendations, as set by the Institute of Medicine. Your health care provider will tell you what dose is appropriate for you.

Current recommendations are:

- ❑ Infants 0-6 / 7-12 months: 400 IU/day (upper limit 1000/1500)
- ❑ Children 1-3 / 4-8 / 9-18: 400 – 600 IU/day (upper limit 2500/3000/4000)
- ❑ Adults under 70: 600 IU/day (upper limit 4000)
- ❑ Adults over 70: 800 IU/day (upper limit 4000)

CONCERNS?

Some individuals will need more than 4000 IU/day of vitamin D to correct a deficiency.

Make sure to ask your health care provider exactly how and when you should take this product.

My Health Care Provider's Notes:

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