

VITAMIN D – FACTS & MYTHS

MYTH: GETTING A LOT OF SUN EXPOSURE ONLY ON THE WEEKENDS IS GOOD SUN EXPOSURE BEHAVIOR.

It is important to get consistent, sensible sun exposure each day. Try to get 15-30 minutes of midday sun exposure each day, instead of ‘catching up’ on the weekend with hours of unprotected exposure.

MYTH: VITAMIN D IS ONLY IMPORTANT FOR BONE HEALTH.

Vitamin D is important for your bones, but researchers are discovering that vitamin D may play a role in almost every area of health.

MYTH: YOU CAN PRODUCE VITAMIN D THROUGH SUNLIGHT THAT PASSES THROUGH A WINDOW.

Things like glass windows, air pollution, and clouds can block the rays from the sun that help make vitamin D in your skin.

MYTH: IN PLACES LIKE SEATTLE AND NEW YORK CITY, IT IS POSSIBLE TO MAKE VITAMIN D FROM THE SUN YEAR ROUND.

In northern regions, the angle of the sun during winter does not allow vitamin D production from sun exposure. It is important that you take supplements during this time of year.

FACT: VITAMIN D PRODUCTION FROM THE SUN IS BEST AT MIDDAY.

You should try and get sun exposure between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM as this is the best time of day to make vitamin D from the sun. Remember, if your shadow is shorter than you are tall, you are making vitamin D from the sun.

FACT: THERE ISN'T ENOUGH VITAMIN D IN THE FOODS YOU EAT TO MEET YOUR DAILY NEEDS.

While eating a well-balanced diet is important for overall health, there is not enough vitamin D in most food sources to rely on diet alone for adequate intake.

FACT: YOU DO NOT NEED TO BURN YOUR SKIN IN ORDER TO GET ENOUGH VITAMIN D FROM THE SUN.

It is possible to produce enough vitamin D for the day in as little as ten minutes, depending on various factors such as your skin type and the amount of skin you expose. Generally, you only need to expose yourself to the sun for about half the time it takes for your skin to turn pink. You do not want to get a sunburn.

FACT: SUNSHINE IS THE BEST, MOST NATURAL WAY TO GET THE VITAMIN D THAT YOU NEED.

It is best to first try and get safe, sensible sun exposure in order to get the vitamin D that you need. Only in situations where sun exposure isn't possible, such as working indoors on weekdays or during winter, should you look to use supplements or tanning beds.

Note: Tanning beds should be treated with the same behavior as sun exposure. You should look for a low-pressure tanning bed and only expose yourself for half the time it takes for your skin to turn pink.