



## Nutrition Education

### Get More Vitamin D

1. It is common during the winter season to have limited sun exposure. **Try spending 5-10 minutes in the sun, 2-3 times per week.** (Remember to avoid over exposure to the sun without sun protection.)
2. When grocery shopping **look for fortified foods that contain Vitamin D** such as fortified vitamin D milk, breakfast cereals and orange juice.
3. **Try eating more fatty fish** such as salmon, mackerel, herring and sardines.



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Understanding Nutrition, Whitney/Roles  
&  
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### Vitamin D

#### What is Vitamin D?

Vitamin D is both a nutrient and a hormone that has many roles. It is most commonly known for its important role in bone health. In the body, Vitamin D helps to absorb calcium and phosphorus which is critical for building and maintaining bones. In addition, Vitamin D is important for a healthy immune system, protects against cognitive decline, muscle function, and may protect against cardiovascular disease.



#### Where does Vitamin D come from?

There are 3 ways you can obtain vitamin D

- 1) **From the Sun:** Vitamin D is also known as the “sunshine vitamin.” We produce Vitamin D within our body from the sun.
- 2) **From the foods we eat:** Vitamin D is found in very few foods. Common food sources include: salmon, egg yolks, beef liver, and Vitamin D fortified foods such as orange juice or milk.
- 3) **From supplements:** Some individuals may need to take a Vitamin D supplement. It is always recommended to speak with your health care provider before doing so.

#### What happens if I don't get enough Vitamin D?

Getting too little Vitamin D, whether it be from not consuming enough Vitamin D foods or from limited sun exposure, can possibly lead to a deficiency. A Vitamin D deficiency may lead to muscle weakness, osteomalacia (softening of the bones) or osteoporosis (fragile bones).