



# simply healthy

from your Hannaford Dietitian

## What's the Big Deal with Vitamin D?

### Why do we need Vitamin D?

- To maintain normal blood levels of calcium and phosphorus.
- Helps to aid in the absorption of calcium, helping to form and maintain strong bones.
- Recent research suggests vitamin D may provide protection from osteoporosis, hypertension (high blood pressure), cancer, and several autoimmune diseases.

### How do we get it?

- The sun contributes significantly to the daily production of vitamin D, and as little as 10 minutes of adequate exposure is thought to be enough to prevent deficiencies.
- Few foods are naturally rich in vitamin D, so the best dietary sources of vitamin D are fortified dairy foods, cereals, vitamin supplements, oily fish, egg yolks, liver, and cod liver oil naturally contain vitamin D.

### Why is it difficult to get enough?

- SPF 8 and SPF 15 reduce Vitamin D production by 95% and 99% respectively. New recommendations are to allow your skin to be exposed to the sun's rays for 15 minutes a day before applying sunscreen. Darker complexions may need even longer exposure to synthesize Vitamin D.
- The sun's UVB rays that trigger our body's natural production of vitamin D are weak during the fall and winter months in the northern U.S. and Europe.
- Obesity: If you are carrying too much weight, the vitamin D is stored in fat, unable to circulate through the bloodstream.
- Age: As we age, we lose the ability to produce Vitamin D, with 75% lost by age 70.



### Getting enough Vitamin D?

recommended dosages are

**infants 0-12 months:**  
400 IU per day

**children & most adults:**  
600 IU per day

**over age 70:**  
800 IU

For bone health and chronic disease prevention, many people are likely to need more vitamin D than the government guidelines recommend.

The upper limit for Vitamin D intake is currently set at 4000 IU per day with intakes greater than this not appearing to pose harm.



**Interested in learning more?** Our registered dietitians hold classes, have on-the-sales-floor nutrition demonstrations and do healthy store tours. They can give you the information you need to make the healthy life style changes you want. For free nutritional advice, you can also email a private message to our staff registered dietitian at [hannaford.com/dietitian](mailto:hannaford.com/dietitian)