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Current guidance
NIH Office of Dietary Supplements · MedlinePlus · National Library of Medicine

The Vitamin D Dosing Plan

The test, the strength, the meal, and the seal to look for.

4,000
IU · THE ADVISED DAILY CEILING FOR ADULTS

1 Ask for the blood test before the bottle

The right strength rests on a number you lack

- [ ] Ask your clinician for a vitamin D blood test rather than guessing from how you feel.
- [ ] Bring every bottle you already take to the visit, including your multivitamin.
- [ ] Write the result and the date here, so the next test has something to be measured against.
- [ ] A low result is a reason to supplement. A normal result is a reason to stop shopping.

If your result comes back normal and you still feel tired, the tiredness has another cause. Keep looking for it rather than raising the dose.

2 Match the strength to your actual number

More is not better once the shortfall is closed

- [ ] Adults 51 to 70 are advised to get 600 IU a day, and adults over 70 are advised 800 IU.
- [ ] Count the vitamin D hiding in your multivitamin, your fortified milk and your cereal.
- [ ] The advised daily ceiling for adults is 4,000 IU, so read every label you already take.
- [ ] Ask your clinician before going above the everyday strength for any length of time.

3 Take it with the fattiest meal of your day

Vitamin D needs fat in the gut to be absorbed

- [ ] Pair the capsule with the meal that carries the most fat, not with black coffee.
- [ ] Oily fish, fish liver oils, fortified milk and fortified cereal all carry vitamin D.
- [ ] Keep the bottle beside that meal, so the habit does not depend on memory.
- [ ] Food first is the federal advice. The capsule closes the gap food did not.

4 Pick a capsule with an independent seal

A seal is about the bottle, not about the benefit

- [ ] Look for NSF, USP or ConsumerLab on the label before you start comparing prices.
- [ ] A seal does not mean the product is safe for you, or that it will work.
- [ ] A seal means the bottle holds what the label says and carries no harmful contaminants.
- [ ] Recheck your blood level after a few months rather than assuming the strength was right.

THE COACH'S PICK

Momentous Vitamin D3

NSF Certified for Sport, one capsule a day, about 32 cents a day.

Shop the bottle →

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