

VITAMIN D



It's no secret that Vitamin D is an essential nutrient. We get most of our vitamin D from sunlight (90%), some from foods (small amounts in oily fish, meat, mushrooms, eggs) and from supplements.

Our bodies can make most of the vitamin D we need through sunlight. **Vitamin D** is crucial not only for bone **health** but for proper **brain** development and functioning. Low levels of **vitamin D** are associated with depression.

In Scotland, we get enough of the right kind of sunlight for our bodies to make vitamin D in this way during roughly half the year (April to September), mostly between 11 am and 3 pm. A great reason to get out for a lunchtime walk! Though even in winter this will not be sufficient and so the current Scottish Government advice is for everyone (including children) to consider taking a daily supplement containing 10 micrograms of vitamin D.

The amount of sun needed to make enough vitamin D varies from person to person but is always less than the amount that causes tanning or sunburn. 10–15 minutes of unprotected Scottish sun exposure is safe for all, but care should always be taken to cover up or apply sunscreen before any exposed skin becomes red or begins to burn.

There are some people are unlikely to get enough vitamin D from sunlight alone, and certain population groups are considered considered to be a greater risk. This includes:

- Pregnant woman and infants
- Older
- Those who have darker skin
- Those who are housebound.

Think Health Think Nature aims to encourage more use of the outdoors to tackle physical inactivity, mental health issues and health inequalities. Find out more:

www.thinkhealththinknature.scot

