

Vitamin D

Community and Public Health

You need Vitamin D and calcium for strong, healthy bones. Your body makes Vitamin D when the sun light **directly touches your skin**. Shade, clothing, sunscreen, or glass windows prevent this occurring. However, due to the risks of sunburn and skin cancer we need to be careful how much sun we get.

September to April

A daily walk or some form of outdoor activity in the early morning or late afternoon is recommended. **Fair skinned people 6-7 minutes, dark skinned people up to 20 minutes on most days.**

Sun protection – shade, clothing coverage, a hat that shades face and neck, sunscreen and sunglasses between 10 am and 4 pm is recommended for protection from the sun.



May to August

A daily walk or outdoor activity around the middle of the day is important. You will need to spend more time outside – **about 40 minutes each day** with your face and hands exposed.

It is important to talk to your doctor about your Vitamin D levels.

You may need to take Vitamin D tablets.



Who is at risk of low Vitamin D levels?	Some foods contain small amounts of Vitamin D	If you don't have enough Vitamin D you could have:
People with naturally dark skin	Oily fish (eg salmon, tuna, sardines, warehou)	Aches
Veiled women and their children	Milk and milk products	Cramps
People who do not go outside	Eggs and Liver	Pain in your muscles
People who live in the South Island with little time outside in May - August	Some margarines have Vitamin D added	Bones that become soft and break