About Vitamin D and Health

Vitamin D is made in the skin from sun exposure, which is the reason it is often called the ‘sunshine vitamin’ and is important for bone maintaining bone and muscle health as we age. It may also benefit immunity, helping to prevent respiratory infections and reduce inflammation. **Sunshine, not food, is where most of our vitamin D comes from.** So even a healthy, well balanced diet, is unlikely to provide enough vitamin D.

Where is vitamin D found?

- It can be produced in the skin from 10-15mins sun exposure (March-September in Ireland)
- Rich food sources like *oily fish* such as *salmon, sardines* and *trout, cod liver oil, eggs, liver* and some *fortified foods* (e.g. breakfast cereals, fortified milk and some yogurts)
- Food supplements

What are the rates of deficiency in Ireland?

- 1 in 8 adults aged 50 and older, 1 in 5 (during winter)
- 1 in 2 adults aged 85 and older (during winter)

Who is at risk of Vitamin D deficiency?

- Those who don’t get enough daylight exposure or cover most of their skin when outside
- People over 65 years +
- People with darker skin tones
- Those with **chronic diseases** and **lung conditions**
- Smokers, people with elevated weight and inactive people

Vitamin D supplements - preventing deficiency

- All adults should consider taking a daily supplement containing **10 micrograms (10μg)** of Vitamin D, especially during autumn and winter
- Adults aged 65 and older take a vitamin D supplement of **15 micrograms (15μg)** every day

If you are concerned you are not getting enough vitamin D, speak to your doctor