

Community Health Newsletter

Week Four



Vitamin D: The Sunshine Vitamin



D is for Dairy

Fortified foods like milk (some cereals and some orange juice) provide most of the vitamin D in the American diet.

Vitamin D has a direct bearing on muscles, so a deficiency can result in muscle weakness, spasms, and muscle cramps anywhere in the body.

Back to School Breakfast Pizza Recipe

- 1 calcium-fortified whole-wheat English muffin
- 1 egg
- Meat of choice (such as bacon bits or pre-cooked ham or sausage)
- 1 tablespoon of topping of choice (low-fat or fat-free sour cream, taco sauce, or salsa)
- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat Cheddar cheese

Slice English muffin in half. Lay each half on a cookie sheet with the outsides facing down on the sheet.

Scramble the egg in a skillet.

Place the scrambled egg on top of the English muffin.

Top with meat of choice and cheese.

Bake in the oven at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Let cool for 1 minute.

Add sour cream, taco sauce or salsa.

Source: Kansas Public Library

Vitamin D stimulates the body to absorb calcium.

Vitamin D helps the immune and muscular systems function effectively.

Few foods naturally contain vitamin D.

- Fish (salmon, tuna, and mackerel) and fish liver oils
- Egg yolks
- Dairy products (cheese and butter)

ACTIVITY TIP

Exercise and a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D help strengthen bones at any age.

Weight-bearing exercises are great for bones because they force you to work against gravity. Weight-bearing exercises include walking, hiking, jogging, climbing stairs, tennis, and dancing.

Exercise and a good diet may not be enough to stop bone loss caused by medical conditions, menopause, or lifestyle choices such as tobacco use and excessive alcohol consumption.

Exposure to Sun:

Exposing non-sun screened hands, face and arms to the sun for about ten to fifteen minutes (depending on skin sensitivity, latitude and time of day) two to three times a week between 8 am and 4 pm should allow the body to meet its vitamin D requirement.

Skin will not produce vitamin D from exposure to sunshine through a window. Cloudy days, shade, the time of year, latitude, or dark-colored skin also reduces the amount of vitamin D the skin makes.

Three-quarters of U.S. teens and adults are deficient in vitamin D, and these deficits are blamed for everything from cancer and heart disease to diabetes, according to new research. The trend marks a dramatic increase in the amount

