

Vitamin D in Pregnancy

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that is naturally present in very few foods, added to others, and available as a dietary supplement. It is also produced endogenously when ultraviolet rays from sunlight strike the skin and trigger vitamin D synthesis. Vitamin D obtained from sun exposure, food, and supplements is biologically inert and must undergo two hydroxylations in the body for activation. The first in the liver, the second in the kidney.

There are three vitamin D super foods:

FOOD	IU's per serving*	% DV**
Cod Liver Oil, Fermented, 1 teaspoon	1,950	487
Cod Liver Oil, Regular, 1 teaspoon	400	100
Swordfish, cooked, 3 ounces	566	142
Salmon, sockeye (cooked, 3 ounces)	447	112

Other food sources of vitamin D include:

Sardines canned in oil, 3 ounces	175	44
Tuna canned in water, drained 3 ounces	154	39
Orange Juice, fortified with Vitamin D, 8 ounces	137	34
Cow Milk, whole, 8 ounces	98	24
Cow Milk, 2% fat, 8 ounces	105	26
Cow Milk, 1% fat, 8 ounces	127	32
Cow Milk, Skimmed, 8 ounces	100	25
Goat Milk, 8 ounces	29	7
Yogurt – from cow's milk, 6 ounces	80	20
Beef or calf liver, cooked 3 ounces	42	11
Egg yolks, 1 large	41	10
Butter, 1 tablespoon	9	2
Cheese, Swiss 1 ounce	6	1

* IUs = International Units.

** DV = Daily Value. DVs were developed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to help consumers compare the nutrient contents among products within the context of a total daily diet. The DV for vitamin D is currently set at 400 IU for adults and children age 4 and older. Food labels, however, are not required to list vitamin D content unless a food has been fortified with this nutrient. Foods providing 20% or more of the DV are considered to be high sources of a nutrient, but foods providing lower percentages of the DV also contribute to a healthful diet.