

Food Sources of Vitamin D

Very few foods in nature contain vitamin D. The flesh of fatty fish (such as salmon, tuna, and mackerel) and fish liver oils are among the best sources. Small amounts of vitamin D are found in beef liver, cheese, and egg yolks.

Fortified foods provide most of the vitamin D in the American diet. For example, almost all of the U.S. milk supply is voluntarily fortified with 100 IU/cup. (In Canada, milk is fortified by law with 35–40 IU/100 mL, as is margarine at ≥ 530 IU/100 g.) In the 1930s, a milk fortification program was implemented in the United States to combat rickets, then a major public health problem. Other dairy products made from milk, such as cheese and ice cream, are generally not fortified. Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals often contain added vitamin D, as do some brands of orange juice, yogurt, margarine and other food products.

Most people meet at least some of their vitamin D needs through exposure to sunlight.

<u>Food</u>	<u>IUs per serving*</u>
Cod liver oil, 1 tablespoon	1,360
Salmon (sockeye), cooked, 3 ounces	447
Mackerel, cooked, 3 ounces	388
Tuna fish, canned in water, drained, 3 ounces	154
Orange juice fortified with vitamin D, 1 cup (check product labels, as amount of added vitamin D varies)	137
Milk, nonfat, reduced fat, and whole, vitamin D-fortified, 1 cup	115–124
Yogurt, fortified with 20% of the DV for vitamin D, 6 ounces (more heavily fortified yogurts provide more of the DV)	88
Margarine, fortified, 1 tablespoon	60
Liver, beef, cooked, 3.5 ounces	49
Sardines, canned in oil, drained, 2 sardines	46
Egg, 1 large (vitamin D is found in yolk)	41
Ready-to-eat cereal, fortified with 10% of the DV for vitamin D, 0.75–1 cup (more heavily fortified cereals might provide more of the DV)	40
Cheese, Swiss, 1 ounce	6

* IUs = International Units.

Source: Office of Dietary Supplements, available at <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/vitamind#h3>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrient Database Web site lists the nutrient content of many foods. It also provides a comprehensive list of foods containing vitamin D.

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