



# Prevent Low Vitamin D

## CHALLENGE

Boost vitamin D for better health

## Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Boost Vitamin D.”
2. Create a plan to get adequate vitamin D.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Los Angeles beauty and fashion blogger Jamie Stone started feeling *off*, she chalked it up to a quarter-life crisis. Maybe it was the stress and hustle of building her business.

She felt like she was always in a funk. Her mood was off. She had trouble falling asleep. She’d wake up feeling exhausted and fatigued. Walking up the stairs was hard. And lower back pain was always there, wearing her down a little more every day.

She tried to figure out what was wrong by diagnosing her problem online. But that only seemed to make things worse.

“I decided I was probably dying,” says Stone. “You know, a very typical prognosis when you go down

### Decoding Vitamin D

How much do you know about vitamin D? Take the quiz to find out.



#### T F

1.   About 80 percent of COVID-19 patients have low vitamin D levels.
2.   Salmon contains low levels of vitamin D compared to most other foods.
3.   Your body stores vitamin D in your blood and can draw on reserves for months.
4.   Vitamin D is sometimes called the “sunshine vitamin.”
5.   Lack of vitamin D is not associated with chronic disease and other health problems.

How did you do? If you answered any of these statements incorrectly, take time to learn a little more about vitamin D. New research shows low vitamin D levels may increase the risk for COVID-19.<sup>1</sup> Salmon is a rich source of vitamin D, and low vitamin D levels are linked to a long list of health problems. The good news...most people can improve vitamin D levels with diet and lifestyle changes. lead to serious health problems. The good news... you can learn to manage stress in healthy ways.

Answers: 1. True. 2. True. 3. False. 4. True. 5. False.

the black hole of Googling: ‘Why am I always tired?’ and ‘Why do I feel awful all the time?’”

Fortunately, she went to see her doctor. A simple blood test gave her some hope she wasn’t dying young. Her symptoms were a result of low vitamin D levels. With help from her doctor, she made some changes to boost her vitamin D levels and start feeling better.

Ready to improve your health, feel better, and have more energy? Take the month-long health challenge to Prevent Low Vitamin D.

Time for more vitamin D  
<https://tinyurl.com/yblfeqw9>

## 4 Ways to Prevent Low Vitamin D

Want to learn how to boost your vitamin D levels? Here are three things you can do:

### 1. Spend 10 to 15 minutes a day in the sun



Too much time in the sun without proper protection increases your risk for skin damage and cancer. However, 10 to 15 minutes of sun exposure is enough to help you get the vitamin D you need.

### 2. Eat more vitamin-D-rich foods



Fish contains more vitamin D than most foods. Try tuna, mackerel, and salmon. Also look for foods fortified with vitamin D like dairy products, orange juice, soy milk, and cereals.

### Vitamin D: Sun v. Food

How does sun exposure measure up to food for vitamin D? Check this out:

- An 8-ounce glass of fortified orange juice contains about 100 IU of vitamin D.
- A 6-ounce serving of salmon contains 400 to 600 IU of vitamin D.
- Spend 10 to 15 minutes in the sun, and your body can make up to 20,000 IU of vitamin D.

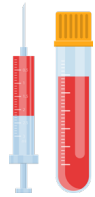
### 3. Take a vitamin D supplement



If a blood test shows that you are vitamin D deficient, your doctor

may recommend taking a multivitamin or vitamin D supplement. If you live in northern regions of the world, or don't spend a lot of time in the sun, it's also a good idea to take a vitamin D supplement during the winter months.

### 4. Ask your doctor about a vitamin D blood test



If you want to check your vitamin D levels, talk to your doctor. A simple blood test called a 25(OH)D blood test is all you need. An ideal level of vitamin D in your blood is 30 ng/mL, according to the Endocrine Society.

When Jamie Stone woke up every morning with body aches and pains, feeling exhausted, and in a funk, she thought she might be dying. But it turned out to be low vitamin D levels.

"I followed my doctor's orders and about a week or so later I saw a surprising difference in my health and overall mood," says Stone. "The funk was totally gone, my back pain... wasn't as bad, and I was no longer getting winded going up stairs."

Vitamin D facts  
<http://tinyurl.com/4waf1wq>

## The Truth about Vitamin D Deficiency



If you are not getting enough vitamin D in your diet or from the sun, you have a vitamin D deficiency. And it's more common than you might think.

An estimated 42 percent of all adults in the United States have low levels of vitamin D. It's even higher in certain groups (African Americans, Hispanics, the elderly).<sup>2</sup>

Most people with low vitamin D levels will not have any symptoms until it gets very low. But low vitamin D levels can lead to:<sup>3</sup>

- Certain types of cancer
- Depression and mood changes
- Diabetes
- Falls
- Fatigue
- Frequent illnesses
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Inflammation
- Joint pain
- Muscle cramps
- Poor bone health

### How much Vitamin D do you need?

Not all health organizations agree on how much vitamin D you need. For example:

- **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** recommends adults and children get at least 600 International Units (IU) of vitamin D per day.
- **The Endocrine Society** recommends 1,500 to 2,000 IU of vitamin D per day for adults; 1,000 IU per day for children.
- For most people: at least 600 IU up to 4,000 IU is safe for adults and children.

Food sources for vitamin D  
<http://tinyurl.com/nowumpm>

## References

1. Hernandez, J., et al. (2020). Vitamin D status in hospitalized patients with SARS-CoV-2 infection. *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, dgaa733. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y2atwoq4>
2. Parva, N., et al. (2018). Prevalence of vitamin D deficiency and associated risk factors in the U.S. population. *Cureus*, 10(6): e2741. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y9a6b2e4>
3. Centers for Disease Control. (2020). Vitamin D: Fact sheet for health professionals. From: <https://tinyurl.com/zh1azwy>





# Prevent Low Vitamin D

**CHALLENGE**  
Boost vitamin D  
for better health

### Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you exercise 10-30 minutes.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you get adequate vitamin D.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you take steps to Prevent Low Vitamin D. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____		
HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____		
HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____		
HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____		
HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____		

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I made choices to get vitamin D  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes

### Other wellness projects completed this month:

-----  
 -----

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

