



Vitamin D: Do You Get Enough?

More than half the US population could be deficient in vitamin D! Do you get enough? The research on vitamin D is fascinating. Most (if not all) the cells in our body have vitamin D receptors. Vitamin D is not only important for bone health, but appears to be linked to our immune system, multiple sclerosis, both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, heart disease and cancer.

The sun is the primary source of vitamin D, with fortified milk as the main food source. We used to think that was enough to handle our vitamin D needs – but we need more than we previously thought and many factors impact how much we actually get from the sun. I think it is a good idea for most people to supplement with vitamin D. Here is information to help you decide what is best for you:

How much do we need? We know the old recommendation of 400 IU daily is too little. There is not a new official recommendation, but consensus runs around 1,000 IU. The preferred form is vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol). Recommendations could rise as the research continues. The old upper limit for safety was 2,000 IU, but key researchers now indicate that 10,000 IU is probably safe.



How do we get it? Age, skin color, weight, angle of the sun, sunscreen and covering up all impact how much vitamin D we are able to absorb. Some people really can rely on getting their needs met from the sun, but for most of us supplementing will be a more reliable approach. You get some vitamin D in a multiple vitamin pill, and also in most calcium supplements. If you drink milk or soy milk on a regular basis you can add that in too. Add up the various sources, and take additional supplementation to reach 1000 IU. You can get supplements that provide 400 IU; it is not a problem if it all adds up to a little more than 1,000.

Why is vitamin D important? Vitamin D is really a hormone rather than a true vitamin. We have known for a long time that it is required for calcium absorption, bone growth and bone density. Newer research is linking vitamin D to muscle growth, immune function, inflammation and uncontrolled cell growth. For a long time researchers have noticed that winter is associated with more symptoms for Multiple Sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis, and an increase in the diagnosis of cancer, diabetes and other autoimmune diseases. They now think it is because we get less vitamin D in winter.

There is more! Read the rest of this article on my website: Vitamin D Fact Sheet. Please share this information with friends: spread good health this season!

<http://www.healthyhabitscoach.com/nutrition.htm>

Holiday Strategies: Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving dinner is around the corner, a meal custom-made for overeating. It helps to pay attention and to have some thoughtful strategies to avoid that uncomfortable feeling of being stuffed.

Just having a strategy puts you ahead of the game, so here are some tips to help you really enjoy the holiday with comfort. This does not mean that you need to do everything “right”. Thanksgiving only comes once a year. It is may be the one chance you get to indulge in some of your family favorites. Enjoy them! Your strategy can include that.

When developing the strategies or intentions that feel right to you, think about what you want. Be realistic. What is most important to you? What is less important; what can you give up or limit without missing it much?

Assess the situation. What foods are likely to be there? Will there be appetizers? Flowing alcohol? Multiple starches? Six desserts? It is much easier to think about the food landscape ahead of time, before you are tempted with the smells and sights of the food itself.

Let's start with **drinks**. Skip sodas and punches; save your calories for the food. Go lightly on alcohol – not only do the calories add up, alcohol dulls your awareness and seduces you to eat more. Consider limiting to just one glass of wine with your meal. You can have a glass of wine anytime, but how often do you get stuffing and pumpkin pie!

What about **appetizers**? Same deal here. How important are these to you? Chances are you'll get lots more opportunities for appetizers during the holiday season. This may be a day to skip them entirely or be very selective. If you are starving, it will be harder to resist the temptation, so consider having a light snack ahead of time.

For more Thanksgiving strategies, go to my blog for the full column: <http://healthyhabitscoach.wordpress.com/holiday-strategies-thanksgiving/>

Food Fitness: Holiday Strategies Nov 12 5:30-6:30 pm

Find the joy in eating without the stress:

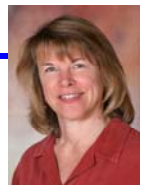
- Identify the challenges and create strategies for success
- Learn tools to increase your awareness of what you eat
- Learn internal cues for when to eat and when to stop

At Santa Rosa Fit Body Balance studio, \$10: register- 707 576-8376

Kathy Nichols: Life Coach & Registered Dietitian

I work with people who are ready to stop dieting and are looking for a way of eating that is sustainable, enjoyable and healthy.

Discover Wellness from the Inside Out!



Kathy Nichols is the Healthy Habits Coach. She is a nutrition expert with 30 years experience as a registered dietitian. Her life coach training and certification through the Coaches Training Institute provide the tools and perspectives to change how you think about food. **707 431-7524** www.healthyhabitscoach.com