

# MedBen

# WellCare

benefitness for you.

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## The Sunny Side of Vitamin D

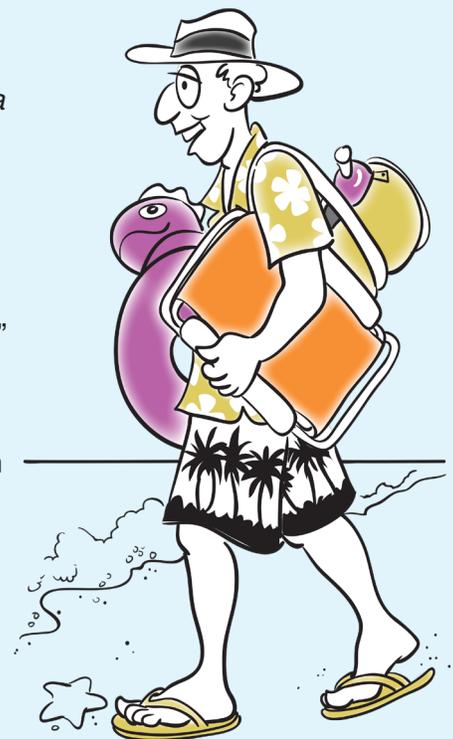
Ahh – sweet summertime. The warmth, outdoor activities, sunshine and... vitamins? That's right! The sun is a great source of vitamin D.

Just thirty minutes of sun exposure to the face, legs, or back, without sunscreen, at least twice a week should give you plenty of vitamin D. *Wait a minute... no sunscreen? No, thank you!*

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends against getting vitamin D from unprotected exposure to sunlight. With good reason, too... that much direct sun exposure might expose you to dangerous levels of cancer-causing UV radiation, which also causes wrinkles and age spots. Even so, the once well-known thought of "getting a base tan so I don't burn" has been debunked and deemed as providing minimal protection.

If you can't get your fill of vitamin D safely from the sun, where can you get it? Unfortunately, the body is designed to absorb vitamin D through the skin and not by mouth. So although foods like tuna and cheese contain some vitamin D, it's hard to find foods that provide adequate amounts. Therefore, a good alternate source of the vitamin can be found in supplements.

Be mindful however, of how much you are taking. Too much vitamin D can cause high blood calcium level, which could result in nausea, constipation, confusion, abnormal heart rhythm, and even kidney stones. Always consult your physician before adding any supplement to your diet.



## Beating the UV Rays this Summer

While enjoying the beautiful summer weather, keep yourself protected from harmful rays.

- Wear a SPF 30+, broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB radiation.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat. (But make sure to still apply sunscreen to the face and ears!)
- Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses that block 99-100% UV rays.
- Seek shade when able, but especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. This is when the UV rays are at their strongest.
- It may be hot, but wearing tightly woven long-sleeve shirts and pants protect the skin.
- Check your body regularly for new moles. If you notice any changes, seek guidance from your physician.

SOURCES: WebMD, Cancer.net, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention