


Cholecalciferol (Vitamin D3)

Patient Information

This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor or health care provider. We encourage you to discuss with your doctor any questions or concerns you may have.

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As of this writing, vitamin D is still being investigated for its role in multiple sclerosis. Ask your provider for the most up to date information.

USED FOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slowing the progression of multiple sclerosis (MS). Although it is not fully understood, low Vitamin D levels may be linked to immune system function and risk of MS. It will also provide additional benefits of decreasing the risk of fractures, osteoporosis, and osteopenia.
HOW IT WORKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vitamin D can help regulate the immune system and protect the nerve cell from further damage. It can also help the body absorb calcium to maintain bone health.
HOW IT IS SUPPLIED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available over-the-counter (OTC) and by prescription in many forms and brands: Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) 400 IU (international units), 1000 IU, 2000 IU, 5000 IU, 25000 IU, 50000 IU in capsules or tablets or liquids Vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol) 400 IU, 2000 IU, 50,000 IU in capsules or tablets Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) is preferable to Vitamin D2 because it is more active. 
HOW IT IS GIVEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vitamin D may be taken with or without food. Fat-containing meals may enhance vitamin D absorption.
DOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your dose of vitamin D will vary depending on your individual needs, but will usually be 5000 units by mouth once a day
OTHER SOURCES OF VITAMIN D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vitamin D is often referred to as the “sunshine vitamin” because sunlight helps the body make the active form of Vitamin D. It is also found in egg yolks, fatty fish (such as salmon), fortified fish, fortified milk, and fortified cereal.
STORAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vitamin D may be kept at room temperature. Keep the medication away from direct sunlight, extreme heat, or cold.

<p>COMMON SIDE EFFECTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally there are no side effects or minimal side effects with taking Vitamin D unless too much is taken. • Serious side effects associated with taking too much Vitamin D include diarrhea, loss of appetite, frequent urination, frequent thirst, headache, and mood changes.
<p>DRUG INTERACTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before starting or stopping ANY medication or supplements, please notify your pharmacist to check for interactions. • Some medications can affect the absorption of Vitamin D such as a medication for losing weight called Orlistat (Xenical, Alli) and cholesterol medications called colestipol (Colestid) or cholestyramine. If you take long-term Statin medications to control cholesterol or steroids (corticosteroids), this may cause low Vitamin D levels over time.
<p>MONITORING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have regular blood tests for vitamin D levels (25-hydroxyvitamin D) and your dose may be adjusted if the level is low. • Your target Vitamin D level should be middle of the normal range
<p>MORE INFORMATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites: www.nationalmssociety.org