What is the latest information on Vitamin D?
New research shows that this important nutrient is needed in greater amounts than we used to think. Changes in our environment and the way we live have made it so many people don’t get enough vitamin D. We are learning more about the impact this can have on our health.

Why is Vitamin D important?
Vitamin D promotes strong bones and teeth and prevents rickets. It also plays an important role in preventing infections, heart disease, some types of cancer, diabetes and autoimmune diseases like lupus, fibromyalgia, and multiple sclerosis.

Mild Vitamin D deficiency may contribute to developmental delays, unusual irritability, muscle or joint pain, and poor growth.

How much Vitamin D do we need each day?
Vitamin D is measured in international units (IU). The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 400 IU for infants, children, and teenagers each day. Adults need 1000 - 2000 IU daily.

What foods contain Vitamin D?
Foods that contain vitamin D naturally are limited to fatty fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel, and sardines), liver, cod liver oil and egg yolks. Vitamin D is added to other foods, including milk, infant formula, and some yogurt, margarine, cereal and orange juice products. However, unless you eat 14 ounces of fatty fish or drink four 8 ounce cups of milk or fortified orange juice every day, it is difficult to get the recommended amount of vitamin D from foods.

Does everyone need to take Vitamin D supplements?
The use of a supplement is recommended for most people. Talk with your health care provider if you have questions about taking supplements.
What type of supplements should my family take?
Supplements are available over-the-counter in a variety of forms. Be sure to read the label and follow package directions.

Infants: Liquid vitamin D drops are available separately or in combination with other nutrients such as vitamins A, C, iron or fluoride. Use only the dropper that comes with the product and follow the directions on the package for the amount to use. The drops can stain, so you may want to give them to your baby in the bathtub!

Children: Chewable multivitamins containing Vitamin D are available. Most product labels advise ½ tablet daily for children younger than four, and take one tablet daily for ages four through adult. Some “gummy” vitamin products are not complete. It is best to buy a product that says “complete” on the label.

Adults: Select a multivitamin that contains 1000 IU of vitamin D. Generic vitamins are fine. Prenatal vitamins contain vitamin D.

Can't my family get enough Vitamin D from sunshine?
Your body can make vitamin D when your skin is exposed to sunlight but this is not a dependable source in Oregon. Your skin makes little if any vitamin D in northern climates like Oregon, except during the summer months. This puts all of us at greater risk for vitamin D deficiency.

There are many factors that affect your exposure to sunlight and the amount of vitamin D your skin can make from it, including:

- Amount of time you spend outdoors
- How much clothing you wear outdoors
- Whether you use sunscreen
- Whether you are severely overweight
- Your skin pigmentation and the age of your skin
- Season of year and time of day
- Presence of air pollution or smog
- Weather conditions

Is it possible to get too much vitamin D?
Current research suggests that there is not a risk of getting too much vitamin D from a combination of sunlight, food, and supplements used in the recommended amounts.