

# Lunch at the Library's HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK



This healthy tip of the week was adapted from "KidsHealth from Nemours," [kidshealth.org/en/parents/strong-bones.html](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/strong-bones.html). For more tips, visit [kernlibrary.org](https://kernlibrary.org) or [kidshealth.org](https://kidshealth.org).

## Vitamin D

### What Is Vitamin D?

Vitamin D is a nutrient that helps the body take in calcium from the foods that we eat. Together, calcium and vitamin D build bones and keep them strong. Vitamin D also plays a part in heart health and fighting infection.

### Where Does Vitamin D Come From?

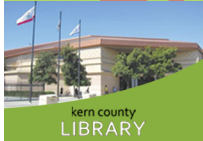
- The Sun- Our bodies make vitamin D when our skin is exposed to the sun. It's hard to get enough vitamin D from the sun, though. Most kids and adults spend lots of time indoors at school and work. When outdoors, it's important to protect skin to prevent melanoma and skin damage from too much sun exposure.
- Food- Very few foods have vitamin D naturally. The foods with the most are fatty fish and fish oils. Kids don't eat these foods a lot. That's why food companies add vitamin D to milk, yogurt, baby formula, juice, cereal, and other foods. Adding vitamin D to foods is called "fortifying." It's helpful, but it still may not be enough.
- Supplements- To get enough vitamin D, children often need to take a multivitamin with vitamin D or a vitamin D supplement. Vitamin D is sometimes labeled as vitamin D3.

### How Can I Help My Child Get Enough Vitamin D?

Because vitamin D is so important, you'll want to be sure your child gets enough. Giving your child a daily supplement or a multivitamin with vitamin D is the easiest way to do this. Health care providers might order a blood test if they think a health problem is keeping a child from getting enough vitamin D. If doctors don't think your child has a health problem, there's no need for a blood test.

### What About Calcium?

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium, a building block for strong bones. Unlike with vitamin D, kids usually can get enough calcium from food. High-calcium foods include milk, cheese, and yogurt. Food makers often fortify foods like cereal, bread, or juice with calcium.



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