Vitamin D is a hormone that controls calcium levels in the blood; crucial for bone and muscle development, and in the prevention of osteoporosis. Vitamin D can be found in some foods, but it is difficult to get enough vitamin D from diet alone. The sun is the best natural source of vitamin D.

So how do you get enough sun for vitamin D without increasing the risk of skin cancer?

Check the daily sun protection times online or use the free SunSmart smartphone app to determine whether or not sun protection is required in your location.

Sunscreen use should not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

30 - 60 days
Our bodies only store enough vitamin D to last between 30-60 days.

How much sun is enough?

UV levels vary across Australia so the amount of sun required for vitamin D depends on your location and the time of year.

One third of Australians are low in vitamin D

...but 2 in 3 Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer by the age of 70.

During months when the UV is below 3 all day, skin types 1 – 4 should aim for 2-3 hours of midday winter sun exposure spread over the week to the face, arms, hands (or equivalent area of skin)

When the UV is above 3 skin types 1 – 4 should aim for just a few minutes of mid-morning or mid-afternoon sun exposure each day

Skin types 5 & 6 may need 3 – 6 times this amount.

Skin types 5 & 6 again may need 3 – 6 times this amount.

Staying out in the sun longer doesn’t increase vitamin D.

The more skin exposed, the more vitamin D you make.

Top Tip! During winter, go for a midday run in a t-shirt! Exercise helps!