

Stay on your feet and stay active

with a little help from Vitamin D





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Keeping your muscles and bones in good condition is a big part of staying active and independent as you get older.

The stronger your muscles and bones are, the less likely you are to experience the falls that can affect people particularly from the age of 65 onwards.

This is because your muscles and bones play an important role in your posture, balance and mobility.

The good news is, you can enhance your muscle strength and bone density, and reduce your risk of falling, by taking regular Vitamin D supplements.

These supplements are available free of charge if you're currently living in a residential care facility.



You can reduce your risk of falling

Boosting your Vitamin D levels

It's not uncommon for your body's Vitamin D levels to decrease as you get older – especially if you spend less time outside in the sun, which is one of the main sources of Vitamin D.

Taking Vitamin D supplements is therefore a positive way to boost your body's Vitamin D levels and strengthen your muscles – so you don't have to accept falls as part of getting older.





How Vitamin D works to prevent falls

Vitamin D has been shown to increase the number and size of certain types of muscle fibres, which play an important role in balance and mobility.

It also helps maintain bone density, by assisting with the absorption of calcium into your bones.

This means there is less risk of suffering fractures or serious injury if you do fall.

It's safe and effective

Vitamin D supplements have no known side-effects, and can be safely combined with most medications.

You may not be able to take them if you have certain medical conditions such as hypercalcaemia.

However, the supplements will always be prescribed by your doctor, who will make sure they're safe for you.

Frequently asked questions

Am I eligible for the free supplements?

Free Vitamin D supplements are available to anyone living in a residential care facility, as long as your doctor determines you are suitable.

What form does the supplement take?

The supplements come in a tablet that will be prescribed by your doctor.

How often do the supplements need to be taken?

Two tablets are taken together in the first month. After this, one tablet is taken monthly.

Are there any other health benefits of taking Vitamin D supplements?

As well as helping to prevent falls, low levels of Vitamin D have been linked to many serious chronic illnesses, including rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, cardiovascular diseases, some cancers and diabetes.

If I take Vitamin D supplements, does this mean I do not need to exercise?

If possible, you should continue with your exercise even if you are taking Vitamin D supplements. Exercise has many benefits in addition to building muscle strength. It has been shown to help you maintain the strength of your bones, has been linked to many positive health outcomes such as lower blood pressure and makes you feel happier.

Need more information?

If you have any questions about the free Vitamin D supplements, please talk to your doctor or facility staff.

You can also find out more about how you can stay on your feet and avoid falls at:

- www.acc.co.nz/vitamin-d



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