

Supplemental Forms of Calcium and Vitamin D

Calcium

Several different kinds of calcium compounds are used as calcium supplements. The two most common forms are calcium carbonate and calcium citrate. Calcium carbonate is generally less expensive and provides a high amount of elemental, absorbable calcium and is usually a first choice for calcium supplementation. Available calcium compounds include:

- Calcium Carbonate (40% calcium)
- Calcium Citrate (21% calcium—but better absorbed from the GI tract than calcium carbonate)

In general, calcium absorption is best if no more than 500mg of calcium is taken at a time. Calcium carbonate is usually best absorbed when taken with food. Some calcium products contain other ingredients such as magnesium and vitamin K, but these products do not work better than those with calcium only.

There are concerns that certain calcium supplement sources may inherently contain contaminants such as lead and heavy metals. Products derived from coral and dolomite used as calcium supplements have had these concerns. Always look for supplements with the USP (United States Pharmacopeia) verified mark to ensure the product meets purity and quality standards.

Common side effects of calcium supplements include constipation and upset stomach. Calcium carbonate appears to cause more constipation than other forms. Stomach upset may be minimized by giving the calcium in divided doses two or three times a day.

Commonly used for kids:

- Chewable Tums (Over the Counter)
Tums Ultra 1000 = 400mg calcium per tablet
Tums Extra 750 = 300mg elemental Calcium per tablet



- Calcium Carbonate liquid (available by prescription only) = 500mg calcium per 5 mL

Vitamin D

Several forms of vitamin D are available for supplementation. Blood levels of vitamin D can be followed and doses adjusted to reach certain goals. Ergocalciferol (Vitamin D2) and Cholecalciferol (Vitamin D3) are the most common supplemental vitamin D forms. Both will increase the levels of vitamin D in the blood and body; however, cholecalciferol appears to be slightly more effective at raising the blood levels.

Keep this and all medicines out of reach of children. Dispose of all unused medicine after treatment is completed. Wash your hands carefully before and after giving medicine. If you use a dropper or syringe, wash it after each use. If too much or the wrong kind of medicine is taken, call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222. Certain over-the-counter medicines and herbs can make some conditions worse or can be harmful when taken with other medicines. Tell your doctor if you are taking any OTC medicines or herbs. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Gillette Telehealth nurse at 651-229-3890.

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Because vitamin D can come from sun, food and supplements, the best measure of one's vitamin D status is a blood level of a form known as 25-hydroxyvitamin D. This level is the main circulating form of vitamin D in the body. In general, the goal for 25-hydroxyvitamin D level is to be greater than 30 ng/mL but no higher than 50 ng/mL. Your doctor will work with you to determine if your vitamin D level should be checked and what blood level goal is best for you.

Commonly used for kids:

- Cholecalciferol (Vitamin D3) tablets or soft gels, melt-aways or liquid forms
 Vitamin D3 tablets or soft gels = 400 unit, 1000 unit, 2000 unit. Tablets are crushable, if needed.
 Vitamin D3 oral liquid = 400 unit/mL
 Vitamin D3 melt-away, example:



Vitamin D3 VitaMelts from Nature Made come in a delicious wild berry flavor and delivers 1,000 IU of vitamin D3 per serving. This fast melting formula is designed to support bones, teeth, muscle and immune health. Contains no synthetic dyes, artificial flavors, preservatives or yeast.

[Terms and Ingredient Definitions](#)

CATEGORIES

Supplement Facts

Serving Size 1 tablet

	Amount Per Tablet	% Daily Value
Vitamin D3 (as Cholecalciferol)	1,000 IU	250%

- High Dose Cholecalciferol wafer (Vitamin D3, Replesta®)
 Replesta® = 50,000 units Vitamin D3/wafer
 Children's Replesta® = 14,000 units Vitamin D3/wafer



Replesta®

- Delicious, natural orange-flavored chewable wafer
- 50,000 IU cholecalciferol per wafer
- Each box contains 4 wafers



Children's Replesta®

- For children ages 6 & up
- Easy-to-take chewable wafer
- Once-weekly dosing
- Each box contains 6 wafers

Note: This product is a medical food, available behind the pharmacy counter or by prescription only. Your pharmacy may need extra time to order in the product. It may not be covered by insurance.

- High Dose Ergocalciferol (Vitamin D2, Drisdol®)
 Drisdol® oral solution = 8,000 unit/mL
 Drisdol® capsules 50,000 units

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