- Vitamins



HEALTH

Can You Get VITAMIN D *Through A Window?*

BY *Jaime Stathis*

If you don't get enough regular exposure to sunlight, you can eat more vitamin D-rich foods or find the right vitamin D supplement based on your nutritional needs. You can also get vitamin D from the sun. As the Harvard Health blog explains: "The sun's energy turns a chemical in your skin into vitamin D3, which is carried to your liver and then your kidneys to transform it to active vitamin D.

"Ultraviolet B radiation (UVB) radiation is the type of radiation from the sun that triggers vitamin D production in the body and turns it into the active form of vitamin D," explains Dr Grant Radermacher.

UVB radiation is mostly blocked by *ordinary* window glass. "Since glass absorbs all UVB radiation, exposure of the skin to sunlight that passes through glass, plexiglass and plastic will not result in any production of vitamin D in the skin," says naturopath Dr Carly King.

However, glass doesn't block UVA rays, so sun damage from exposure through windows is still a concern. Just take car windows as an example: that may be a reason the area around the eyes is one of the body parts most at risk for skin cancer.

It's important to note that we don't 'get' vitamin D from the sun in the same way that we get vitamin D through supplements or from eating foods like tuna, salmon or eggs. What happens is that the body produces vitamin D when exposed to UVB rays, which triggers vitamin D synthesis.

Says Dr BreAnna Guan: "Most of the UVB radiation (290 to 320 nanometres) is absorbed by the ozone layer, and is most abundant when the sun is overhead in summer months between the hours of 10am and 2pm."

You don't need to spend much time out there (Dr Guan suggests ten to 15 minutes, max).

Also, apply sunblock. You'll still get the exposure your body needs to make vitamin D.

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