What is Vitamin D?

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin, which is critical in maintaining healthy bones and teeth. It may also protect against a range of diseases and conditions. Despite its name, vitamin D is not a vitamin but is a prohormone or precursor of a hormone. Food sources of vitamin D include fatty fish, egg yolks, cheese, beef liver, fortified milk and mushrooms. Absorbing sunlight is essential for the skin to produce vitamin D. However, darker skin, sunscreen and covering the skin reduce the body's ability to absorb the ultraviolet radiation B rays from the sun. Vitamin D supplements or injections are probably required to boost your vitamin D intake.

Benefits of Vitamin D

• Strengthen **bones**	Vitamin D helps in the absorption and use of calcium, which is needed to develop strong bones. Therefore, reduces the risk of fractures.
• Fight **infection**	Improves the function of the immune system to fight against infection.
• Helps **cancer** patients	For example, a low level of vitamin D has shown to increase the risk of colon cancer and can have a negative impact on the survival of these patients.
• Protective against **heart disease**	The Framingham Heart Study found that patients with low levels of Vitamin D have a 60% higher risk of heart disease.
• Reduces risk of **hypertension**	Vitamin D can be useful to reduce systolic blood pressure in those at risk of hypertension.
• Reduces the risks associated with **obesity**	Low levels of vitamin D are common in patients with obesity and may explain the increased risk of these patients for certain cancers and higher cardiovascular disease risk.
• Benefits in **pre-diabetes**	A study found that those who took combined calcium-vitamin D supplements had a lower rise in glucose levels at 3 years compared with those without.
• Improves symptoms of **depression**	High doses of vitamin D have shown to ameliorate symptoms of depression.
• Reduces risk of **cognitive decline**	The InCHIANTI study found that low levels of vitamin D were associated with substantial cognitive decline in the elderly population.
• Reduces risk of **Parkinson's disease**	High vitamin D levels provide protection against Parkinson's disease.
• Reduces risk of **Multiple Sclerosis**	High circulating levels of vitamin D are associated with a lower risk of developing multiple sclerosis.
• Reduces risk of **Bacterial Vaginosis**	In pregnant women, a deficiency of Vitamin D increases the risk for Bacterial Vaginosis.
• Reduces risk of **Pelvic Floor Disorders**	Higher vitamin D levels are associated with a decreased risk of pelvic floor disorders (urinary and faecal incontinence) in women.
• Protects against **Age-related macular degeneration**	High serum vitamin D concentrations may protect against early AMD in women under 75 years old
• Improves **Restless Leg Syndrome**	Vitamin D supplementation has shown to improve the severity of restless legs syndrome symptoms.
• Improves **Vitiligo**and **Psoriasis**	High-dose Vitamin D3 therapy may be effective and safe for vitiligo and psoriasis patients.