Client Information
Getting Enough Calcium and Vitamin D

Why do I need calcium and vitamin D?
Calcium and vitamin D are important because they can
- Help keep bones strong
- Prevent bones from breaking easily, especially bones in the spine
- Help keep teeth healthy and strong

How much calcium and vitamin D do I need?
How much you need changes throughout your life:
- As a teen, you need at least 1300 milligrams of calcium and 600 IU of vitamin D a day.
- As an adult, from age 19-50, you need about 1000 milligrams of calcium and 400 to 800 IU of vitamin D a day.
- After 50, you need at least 1200 milligrams of calcium and between 800 to 1000 IU of vitamin D a day.

How can I get enough calcium?
The best way to get enough calcium is in the food you eat. Dairy is a great source of calcium — try to eat 3 servings of dairy every day. Some vegetables have calcium in them as well. The following foods are good sources of calcium:
- Yogurt (including frozen yogurt), cheese, milk
- Tofu
- Canned salmon
- Spinach
- Kale
- Broccoli
Also, many foods have calcium added to them. Read the labels when you shop for things like bread, cereal, and orange juice.

How can I get enough vitamin D?
Some women can get enough Vitamin D just by being in sunlight (15 minutes, 2 to 3 times a week). You can also get vitamin D from some foods such as
- fatty fish (salmon, tuna or mackerel)
- beef liver
- cheese
- egg yolks
- milk, orange juice, or yogurt with vitamin D added
- cod liver oil
Are there ways to get enough calcium and vitamin D besides from food?

- Calcium and vitamin D can be gotten as part of vitamin pills or in separate pills or together in one pill.
- Calcium comes in many forms like pills that you swallow whole, pills that dissolve, chewable pills, and soft chews. Some calcium supplements can be taken with food, others should be taken on an empty stomach. Certain types need to be taken multiple times a day.
- Antacids like Rolaids and Tums also have calcium.

Talk to your doctor or nurse about whether you need supplements and if so, which type is best for you.