

Coronavirus Update and Vitamin D

It's important to take a vitamin D as you may have been indoors more than usual this year.

There have been some reports about vitamin D reducing the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19). But there is currently not enough evidence to support taking vitamin D to prevent or treat coronavirus.

You should take 10 micrograms (400 IU) of vitamin D a day between October and early March to keep your bones and muscles healthy.

Some people who have a medical condition cannot take vitamin D or should take a different amount from the general population, such as Sarcoidosis

If you are unsure whether to take vitamin D, please discuss with your health care professional

Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust
Howard Court
14 Tewin Road
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL7 1BW

Tel: 01707 388 000
www.hct.nhs.uk

References

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. (2008) Public health guidance PH11. Maternal and Child Nutrition. Updated (2014) Vitamin D: increasing supplement use in at risk groups <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph56>

NHS Choices 2017 .Vitamin D

Public Health England July 2016: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>
SACN (2016) Vitamin D and Health <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment>

UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative Info sheet
Statement on Vitamin D supplementation for Breastfed Babies.

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Hertfordshire Community
NHS Trust

Vitamin D

National Guidelines for Vitamin D
(Babies, Children and
Pregnant/Breastfeeding Women)

Vitamin D regulates the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body, which are needed to keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy.



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Vitamin D

Our bodies make vitamin D when our skin is exposed to summer sunlight (from April to the end of September). It is not known exactly how much time is needed in the sun but at least two hours a day is required if only the face is exposed and 20-30 minutes if the face arms and neck are exposed without sunscreen. When in the sun you must take care to cover up or protect your skin with sunscreen before you start to turn red or burn.

Vitamin D is also in some foods, including:

- oily fish (such as salmon, mackerel, herring and sardines)
- dairy food
- red meat
- mushrooms

Vitamin D is added to some breakfast cereals, fat spreads and non-dairy milk alternatives. The amounts added to these products can vary and might only be small. Because vitamin D is only found in a small number of foods, whether naturally or added, it is difficult to get enough from foods alone.

Most people in the UK will probably get enough vitamin D from sunlight and a healthy, balanced diet in the spring and summer, so you might choose not to take a vitamin D supplement during these months.

Who is at risk of low vitamin D status?

- Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers
- Babies of mothers with darker skin types & mothers with dark skin from African, Afro-Caribbean and South Asian backgrounds
- Babies born in the winter months and not exposed to sun
- Babies and mothers who wear concealing clothing, reducing exposure to sunshine
- Babies and mothers who spend a lot of time indoors or use sun creams

From the 1st October 2018 Healthy start vitamins will be provided free for use to:

All pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers (10 micrograms of vitamin D a day)

All babies receiving less than 500 ml of formula in 24 hours (8.5 to 10 micrograms of vitamin D a day)

All children from one to four years (10 micrograms of vitamin D a day)



Who should take Vitamin D?

Babies who receive more than 500mls of infant formula daily do not require vitamin D supplementation as it is already added. The vitamins are suitable for vegetarians and free from milk, egg, gluten, soya and peanut residues.

Vitamin supplements containing vitamin D are provided free from the Family Centre Service if you are pregnant or breastfeeding and for babies & children up to 4 years.

Healthy start vitamin drops for children aged from birth to four years will provide

- 10 micrograms of vitamin D3
- 233 micrograms of vitamin A
- 20 milligrams of vitamin C

Healthy start **maternal** vitamin tablets for all pregnant & breastfeeding women will provide:

- 10 micrograms of vitamin D
- 70 milligrams of Vitamin C
- 400 micrograms of folic acid

- Do not take more than the recommended dose
- The best way to give the vitamin drops to a baby is from a sterilised spoon
- Vitamin drops should not be given to breastfed babies ' via a bottle with water or on a dummy
- Speak with your health care professional or GP if you have any concerns about your vitamin D status.

For more information please visit www.hertsfamilycentres.org