Vitamin D Supplements during the COVID-19 pandemic

Vitamin D supplements

As the government is advising people to 'stay at home', Public Health England recommends that adults and children over the age of one should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10 mcg (400iu) of vitamin D. All babies under one year should be given a daily supplement of 8.5–10 micrograms unless they have more than 500mls of fortified formula milk.

Vitamin D is especially important if you:

- are unable to spend time outside, for example you are shielding or self-isolating and do not have access to outdoor space
- are of Asian, African, Afro-Caribbean or Middle Eastern descent
- mostly cover your skin when outdoors
- are pregnant or have given birth recently
- Vitamin D supplements are available to buy from most pharmacies and supermarkets.

Please do not buy more than you need.

Lewisham free vitamin D scheme

Vitamin D supplements are available free of charge for:

- pregnant women
- women for up to one year after giving birth
- children aged four and under.



For more information visit **www.lewisham.gov.uk/freeD** or visit your local pharmacy.

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What is vitamin D?

Vitamin D is important for:

- helping nerves and muscles to work properly
- maintaining a healthy immune system
- keeping teeth and bones healthy.



Lack of vitamin D can lead to:

- Osteomalacia in adults, causing:
  - bone pain
  - muscle weakness.
- Rickets in children, causing:
  - reduced growth
  - muscle weakness.

How we get vitamin D

The best source of vitamin D is sunlight between March and October. Very little vitamin D is available from food sources.

If you already take multi-vitamins, you should check the label to see if they contain vitamin D. If you received a letter from the government asking you to 'shield' or if you are unsure about whether you should take vitamin D, speak to your local pharmacist or GP. For more information about vitamin D visit **www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-andminerals/vitamin-d/**

Please note: There is currently no individual nutrient, food or supplement that will boost immunity or stop us from getting highly infectious viruses like COVID-19. At the time of printing, there was no evidence that vitamin D reduces the risk of Coronavirus.