

Where can I get vitamin D supplements?

Vitamin D supplements can be bought from pharmacies, supermarkets and health shops.

They come in various forms such as tablets, gummies and drops.

In line with national guidance, vitamin D will not be routinely offered on NHS prescription. If you are diagnosed with vitamin D deficiency, you may be prescribed a high-dose treatment for 6 to 12 weeks. After this, you should buy regular supplements for long-term use.

Are there any risks when taking vitamin D supplements?

Taking too much vitamin D over a long period of time can cause too much calcium to build up in the body. This can weaken the bones and damage certain organs.

If you would like more information, you may also find the following resources helpful:

Vitamin D - NHS.UK

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/>

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Vitamin D



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Who is at risk of not getting enough vitamin D?

Some people may be at greater risk of not getting enough vitamin D compared to others. These groups include:

- People with darker skin e.g. people of African, African-Caribbean or South Asian origin
- People aged 65 or over
- Pregnant or breastfeeding women
- People with certain medical conditions; you will be advised by your doctor
- People who spend a lot of time indoors, such as housebound people or those in long-term care settings like hospitals or care homes
- People who take certain medications, such as antiepileptics, antivirals or steroids

What are the symptoms of low vitamin D levels?

Usually, having low vitamin D levels causes no symptoms.

Severe deficiency can cause:

- Mood problems
- Muscle pain
- Bone pain and weakness that can reduce your movements
- Increased risk of bone fractures

Who needs vitamin D supplements?

From about late March or early April to the end of September, most people should be able to make all the vitamin D they need from sunlight. The body creates vitamin D from direct sunlight on the skin when outdoors. Vitamin D is also found in a small number of foods.

But between October and early March we do not make enough vitamin D from sunlight. It is recommended by the NHS that all adults in the UK take a vitamin D supplement in the autumn and winter as there is less sunlight.

People who are at greater risk of vitamin D deficiency should think about taking a daily vitamin D supplement all year round.

How much vitamin D do I need from my supplements?

Adults who need to take a supplement should take 10 micrograms (400 IU) of vitamin D a day.

If your doctor has recommended that you take a different amount of vitamin D, you should follow their advice

Do I need a vitamin D test?

Vitamin D is not tested routinely, so, a vitamin D test will only be recommended by your doctor if:

- you are showing clear signs of deficiency
- you are taking a medication that puts you at risk of vitamin D deficiency
- you have a medical condition that may improve with vitamin D treatment, such as osteomalacia or osteoporosis.