



Office for Health
Improvement
& Disparities

Vitamin D

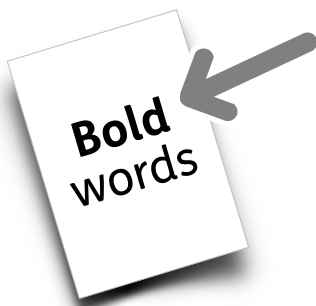
What do you think?



easy
read

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In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are [blue and underlined](#). These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



Vitamin D is a substance that keeps our muscles and bones healthy.



We get it from sunlight and from eating certain foods and drinks.



Some people do not get enough vitamin D.

The Government wants to know what you think about how to help:



- Everyone get enough vitamin D.



- People understand more about vitamin D.



- Health and care professionals know more about vitamin D.



- People get enough vitamin D from foods and drinks.



- People get enough vitamin D by taking vitamin D tablets or drops.



Please tell us what you think by answering these questions.



We need your answers by Monday 20 June 2022.

Vitamin D



Vitamin D helps your body have enough calcium and phosphate.

Calcium and phosphate are substances which are needed to keep your bones and muscles healthy.



If you don't get enough vitamin D, it can lead to:

- An illness called rickets in children.
- Bone pain and muscle weakness in adults. This means you are more likely to have a fall.



Getting vitamin D

Vitamin D is found naturally in a small number of foods.

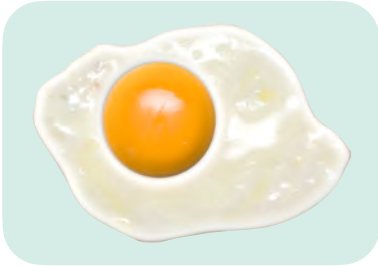
These include:

- Oily fish, like salmon, sardines, herring and mackerel.





- Red meat.



- Liver and egg yolks.

Some foods have vitamin D added to them, like:



- Fat spreads - like types of margarine.



- Breakfast cereals.



The main way that people get vitamin D is from sunlight on their skin.



Between March and September, most people can get the vitamin D they need from sunlight and food.



Extra vitamin D

You can take vitamin D in a tablet or drops that you buy from a pharmacy, supermarket or health shop.

The Government says

The Government says that:

- Everyone should think about taking vitamin D during the autumn and winter.
- People should take vitamin D all year if they:
 - Don't go outside much.
 - They are in a care home.
 - Wear clothes that cover up most of their skin.





- People who have dark skin should take vitamin D all year round.



- Babies and children up to age 4 should take vitamin D all year round.

Groups of people who might not get enough vitamin D



Certain groups of people are more likely to not get enough vitamin D.

These include:



- People with a dark skin, like people who are black or from a south Asian background.



- People who do not get enough sunshine, like:

- older people.



- people who cannot get out easily.

- people in care homes.

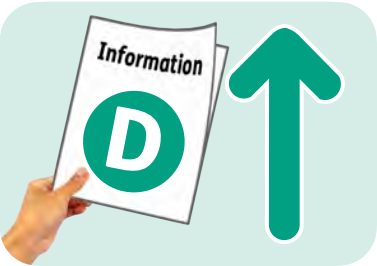


- people who wear clothes that cover most of their skin when they are outdoors.



Question 1: Are there any other groups of people who may have difficulty in getting enough vitamin D? Please tell us.

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Question 2: How could we give better information about vitamin D to groups of people who are not getting enough?

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Helping people know more about vitamin D



The Government has given guidance to people about taking enough vitamin D.



We are planning to start a campaign to help more people know about vitamin D.



Question 3: Do you know any good ways that have been used to tell people about vitamin D?



Question 4: How could companies and shops help people know more about vitamin D?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box intended for writing an answer to Question 4.



Question 5: How could local health services help people know more about vitamin D?

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Helping health workers know more about vitamin D



Health and care workers include:

- staff in hospitals and at your local doctor's surgery.



- community health workers.



- care and support workers.



Question 6: Do you agree or disagree that health and care workers need to know more about vitamin D?

Agree

Disagree

I don't know



Question 7: How can we help health and care workers know more about vitamin D?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box for writing an answer to Question 7.



Question 8: How can health and care workers give better advice and support to local communities?

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Vitamin D added to foods and drinks



In the UK

In the UK, some food companies add vitamin D to some foods and drinks.

These include:



- fat spreads like margarine.



- plant based drinks like soya and oat drinks.



- dried milk.



- breakfast cereals.



The law says that vitamin D must be added when they make **infant formula** and **follow-on formula**.

Infant formula and **follow-on formula** are special kinds of milk for babies.

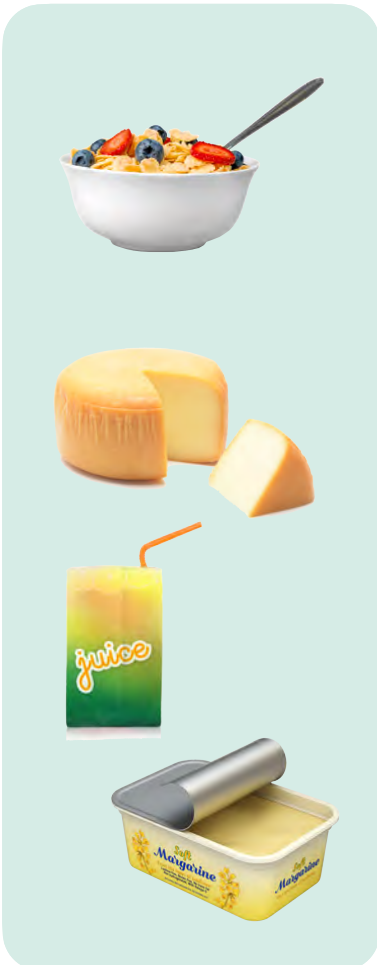


In the USA

In the USA, companies choose to add vitamin D to almost all milk.

Companies also choose to add vitamin D to many:

- breakfast cereals
- yoghurts
- cheeses
- juices
- fat spreads.





In Canada

In Canada, companies must add vitamin D to:



- milk and margarine.



- plant based drinks like soya and oat drinks.



- infant formula.



Question 9: Do you know of other ways that countries have added vitamin D to foods or drinks?

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Question 10: What do you think about:

- Companies choosing to add vitamin D to foods and drinks?



- Governments making companies add vitamin D to foods and drinks?

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Question 11: Do you agree or disagree that it would be good if we helped more people know about foods and drinks with added vitamin D?

Agree

Disagree

I don't know

Please say why you think this.



Question 12: How can we help people know that there is extra vitamin D in certain foods and drinks?

Taking vitamin D



Many people buy vitamin D tablets and drops from supermarkets, pharmacies and health shops.



Some people are given a **prescription** for vitamin D by their doctor.

A **prescription** is a note from your doctor for medication from a pharmacy.



During COVID-19 the government gave free vitamin D tablets to care homes and to people who had to stay indoors.



Healthy Start

Healthy Start is a Government scheme that gives money to pregnant women and families with children under 4 for healthy food and vitamins.



Healthy start vitamins

Some pregnant women, new mothers and children under 4 can get free vitamins from local doctors and clinics.



Question 13: Is there anything that is stopping certain people from taking vitamin D tablets?

Yes

No

I don't know

Please say why you think this.



Question 14: How can we help more people know about the Healthy Start Vitamins Scheme?

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Question 15: How can local health services help more people take vitamin D tablets?

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About you



We would like to ask you some questions about yourself.



Question 16: What is your age?

16 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

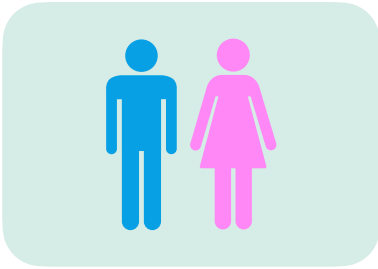
45 to 55

55 to 64

65 to 74

75 or older

Prefer not to say

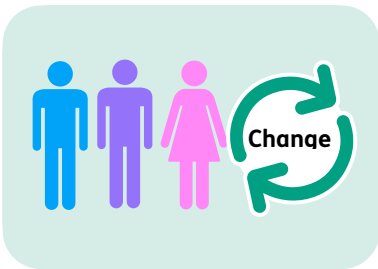


Question 17: What is your gender?

Male

Female

Prefer not to say



Question 18: Is your gender now the same gender you were given when you were born?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say



Question 19: What is your ethnic background? *Please choose the answer that best describes your ethnic background.*

White

Asian or Asian British

Black or African or Caribbean or Black British

More than one ethnic background

Other

Prefer not to say

Question 20: Where do you live in the UK?



England



Scotland



Wales



Northern Ireland



I do not live in the UK

Prefer not to say



Question 21: If you live in England, which area of England do you live in?

- North East England
- North West England
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- East of England
- East Midlands
- West Midlands
- South East England
- South West England
- London
- Prefer not to say



Question 22: Do you have a disability?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say



Question 23: Do you have a health issue that you have had for a very long time?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

Thank you



Thank you for your answers.

Please now send us your answers back by:



- Email:
vitamind.enquiries@dhsc.gov.uk



- Post:

Vitamin D call for evidence
Department of Health and Social
Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

For more information



You can look at our website here:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care

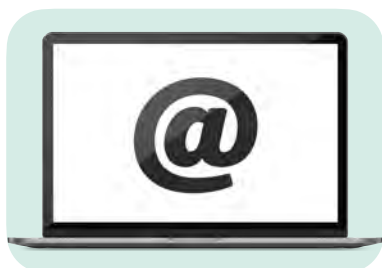
If you need more information please contact us by:



- Post:
Vitamin D call for evidence
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
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SW1H 0EU



- Phone: 0300 790 4007



- Email:
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