

Prevention

The Department of Health and the Chief Medical Officers recommend a dose of 7-8.5 micrograms (approx 300 units) for ALL children from six months to five years of age. This is the dose that the NHS 'Healthy Start' vitamin drops provide. The 'Healthy Start' programme aims to provide vitamins free to people on income support. The British Paediatric and Adolescent Bone Group's recommendation is that exclusively breastfed infants receive Vitamin D supplements from soon after birth.

Adverse effects of Vitamin D overdose are rare but care should be taken with multivitamin preparations as Vitamin A toxicity is a concern. Multivitamin preparations often contain a surprisingly low dose of Vitamin D.

Standard prevention doses

Category	Dose and frequency	Examples of preparations
Newborn up to 1 month	300 - 400 units daily	Abidec, Dalivit, Baby D drops and 'Healthy Start' Vitamins
1 month - 18 years	400 units - 1,000 units daily	Over-the-counter preparations eg: Abidec, Dalivit, Boots high strength Vitamin D, Ddrops, Holland & Barrett SunviteD3, DLux oral spray, SunVitD3 and Vitabiotics tablets

Note: A dose of 10 micrograms of Vitamin D = 400 units

Treatment of deficiency with symptoms

Category	Vitamin D dose and frequency	Duration
Up to 6 months	1,000 units - 3,000 units daily	4 - 8 weeks
6 months - 12 years	6,000 units daily	4 - 8 weeks
12 -18 years	10,000 units daily	4 - 8 weeks

Vitamin D had been difficult to obtain in treatment doses, but is now prescribable as Colecalciferol Liquid 3,000 units/ml. Tablets or capsules of 400, 1,000, 10,000, 20,000 units are also prescribable. Combined 'Calcium and Vitamin D' tablets usually contain only 200 or 400 units of Vitamin D which is a relatively low Vitamin D dose. Unless the patient has insufficient Calcium intake it is often better, and cheaper, to prescribe a pure Vitamin D product.

