

**Further sources of information**

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

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

**Patient Experience Team (PET)**

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King’s Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET n@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET n@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

To be completed by the Communications office  
Leaflet code: PIL202410-01-VID  
Created: October 2024/ Review Date: October 2026

**INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS, PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND CARERS**

**Vitamin D**



## Why do we need Vitamin D?

Vitamin D is needed to keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy. If you have low levels of Vitamin D you may feel tired or have some aches and pains, however, you may have low vitamin D and have no problems at all. If your vitamin D levels are very low, this can sometimes affect your bones and muscles. If children are low in vitamin D, they may not have any pain during the day but may complain of pain during the night.

## How can I increase my Vitamin D levels?

**Spend time outside.** The main way to increase your vitamin D is through direct sunlight on your skin. Small amounts of direct sunlight throughout the year, without suncream, for approximately 10-30 minutes each day, may help to boost your vitamin D levels. Even just exposing your arms and face to the daylight can be enough.



Please remember it is important not to burn in the sun and to use suncream for prolonged sun exposure. Sunbeds are not a recommended source of vitamin D.

People with dark skin, such as those of African, African-Caribbean or south Asian origin, will need to spend longer in the sun to produce the same amount of vitamin D as someone with lighter skin.

**Diet.** A small amount of vitamin D comes from the food that we eat (around 10-15% of the recommended intake), including:

- Oily fish - like mackerel, salmon, sardines and herring
- Egg yolks
- Tinned tuna
- Liver
- Fortified foods such as most fat spreads, soy yoghurts, soy milk, almond milk, some orange juices and breakfast cereals.
- Mushrooms
- Red meat
- Cheese



## Who should take Vitamin D supplements?

Public Health England recommends that everyone should take a daily supplement of vitamin D, particularly during the autumn and winter months (October to March). During this time, there is not enough sunlight to produce enough vitamin D in the skin and it is difficult to get enough through diet alone, therefore vitamin D supplements are suggested.



## Where can I get Vitamin D supplements from?

Vitamin D supplements or vitamin drops containing vitamin D for children are available to buy at most pharmacies, supermarkets, health food shops and some discount stores.

## What dose of Vitamin D should I take?

The amount of vitamin D in the supplements may be stated as International Units (IU) or micrograms.

### Adults and children over 5 years old:

- Adults and children over 5 years old need at least 400 units (10 micrograms) a day.
- Doses of up to 1000 units (25 micrograms) daily are recommended for adults as a supplement.

### Children 1 - 4 years old

The Department of Health recommends that:

- Children aged 1 to 4 years old should be given a daily supplement containing 400 units (10 micrograms) of vitamin D daily all year round.