



1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
  2. Coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon>)
  3. Health and wellbeing during coronavirus (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/health-and-wellbeing>)
  4. Vitamin D supplements: how to take them safely (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vitamin-d-supplements-how-to-take-them-safely>)
- Department of Health & Social Care (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>)

Guidance

# Vitamin D supplements: how to take them safely

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## Contents

Taking vitamin D safely

People who should not opt in

How to store your vitamin D supplements

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vitamin-d-supplements-how-to-take-them-safely/vitamin-d-supplements-how-to-take-them-safely>

Please read this document in full before you decide whether to opt in and before you start taking the vitamin D supplements that have been provided to you.

## Taking vitamin D safely

Please make sure you read and comply with the instructions set out on the product label.

Each '1-A-Day' vitamin D supplement contains 10 micrograms ( $\mu\text{g}$ ) of vitamin D. This is equivalent to 400 international units (IU) of vitamin D. This is the daily amount recommended for the general population by government for general health and in particular to protect bone and muscle health.

If your GP has recommended that you take a different amount of vitamin D, you should follow your GP's advice.

Do not exceed the recommended dose (1 supplement per day containing 10 micrograms ( $\mu\text{g}$ ) equivalent to 400 international units). This is a safe level of intake, designed to meet your nutritional needs. Taking more is not currently recommended.

For most people taking up to 100 micrograms ( $\mu\text{g}$ ) equivalent to 4,000 international units) per day is considered safe. In a few people, taking too many vitamin D supplements over a long period of time can cause too much calcium to build up in the body (hypercalcaemia). This can weaken the bones and damage the kidneys and the heart. NHS.UK has more information about vitamin D, including advice on intakes (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/>).

While some medications may interact with high doses of vitamin D, there are no issues associated with the 10 microgram vitamin D supplement. They are intended to supplement the diet and should not be substituted for a varied diet.

## People who should not opt in

You should not opt in to receive the vitamin D supplement if:

- you are already taking, or are prescribed, a vitamin D supplement by your GP or healthcare professional
- you are under the age of 18
- you have a medical condition or treatment that means you may not be able to safely take as much vitamin D as the general population

If you are one of the following groups or have any of the following medical conditions, you should not opt in through this process and you should speak to your GP or healthcare professional at your next appointment. There are some groups who need to be particularly careful including those under the care of a renal, endocrinology or cancer specialist. This could include people with high vitamin D levels, kidney stones (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-stones/>) (now or in the past), too much parathyroid hormone (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hypoparathyroidism-and-hyperparathyroidism/>) (hyperparathyroidism), cancer (some cancers can lead to high calcium levels), severe kidney disease and a rare illness called sarcoidosis (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sarcoidosis/>).

## How to store your vitamin D supplements

Store the supplements out of the reach of young children.

The supplements should be kept away from pets. Consult with a vet if you are concerned that your pet has consumed any of the vitamin D supplements provided.

Check the product seal is still in place on delivery and do not take the supplements if the seal has been broken.

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