

# Vitamin D supplements

January 2021



The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has announced that a free four-month supply of daily vitamin D supplements will be offered to people who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) and to care home residents, to support general health, in particular bone and muscle health. This is particularly important this year as these individuals are more likely to have been indoors for extended periods due to measures introduced to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Evidence of the link of vitamin D to COVID-19 is still being researched with larger scale trials needed. In the meantime, the Secretary of State has asked the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and Public Health England (PHE) to re-review the existing evidence. The government will publish its findings towards the end of the year.

All care homes will automatically receive a provision for their residents, while people on the CEV list will receive a letter from the DHSC, inviting them to opt in for a supply, to be delivered directly to their homes from January 2021. To opt-in to receive the free supply of vitamin D, people identified on the CEV list will need to register their details between 30 November 2020 and 11 January 2021 at the following link: [www.nhs.uk/get-vitamin-d](http://www.nhs.uk/get-vitamin-d)

People should not opt in to receive the vitamin D supplements if:

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

The advice also states that if a person is one of the following groups or has any of the following medical conditions, they should not opt in through this process and you should speak to your GP or healthcare professional at their 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 (now or in the past), hyperparathyroidism, cancer (some cancers can lead to high calcium levels), severe kidney disease and a rare illness called sarcoidosis.

The Department of Health has issued guidance on how to take these supplements safely, which all CEV patients should read before deciding whether to opt in. This includes advice that people who already take a prescription or a supplement containing vitamin D should not opt in to receive the supplement, and that if they have certain medical conditions or treatments, they should not opt in and should speak to their GP or healthcare professional at their next appointment.

The announcement also highlighted current UK government advice for everyone to take a daily 10 microgram vitamin D supplement over autumn and winter, encouraging everyone to purchase products from retailers.

**For further information, please contact the Medicines Management Team on  
01254 282087 (BwD CCG) or 01282 644807 (EL CCG)**