

Vitamin D supplementation and free supplies for eligible patients - summary information

In 2020, COVID self-isolation and quarantine guidelines potentially led to reduced sun exposure whilst people remained indoors during the summer time. Adults and children are reminded of the recommendation to take vitamin D supplements during winter months to prevent vitamin D insufficiency and linked health problems.

The patient information leaflet

(<http://www.rotherhamccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/Top%20Tips%20and%20Therapeutic%20Guidelines/Therapeutic%20guidelines/Rotherham-CCG-vitamin-D-Sept-2016.pdf>) may be helpful to provide patients with further advice on self-care supplementation with vitamin D, which can be purchased from supermarkets, discount stores and pharmacies, either online or in person.

For the most vulnerable people across the UK vitamin D supplementation over winter season will be provided free of charge at a standard recommended preventative dose of 400iu (10micrograms) colecalciferol daily. This will be supplied as a **4 month course directly to patients**. GPs are not expected to undertake prescribing of low supplementation dose for those individuals.

The Government has announced (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/at-risk-groups-to-receive-free-winter-supply-of-vitamin-d>) provision of **free vitamin D supplements** to patients falling into one of the two following groups:

- **nursing/care home residents** – supplies made directly to the institution where patients reside;
- **extremely clinically vulnerable patients** – those individuals will have received a notification letter in post giving further instruction on **online self-registration required** to receive their free supply in post from January 2021. The online registration is available between 30 November 2020 and 4 January 2021 at the following link: www.nhs.uk/get-vitamin-d

In the meantime, these extremely clinically vulnerable patients are recommended to purchase vitamin D supplementation to prevent vitamin D deficiency, until free delivery is received.

However, some patients from the above groups may not be able to register for their free vitamin D supplementation and are advised to seek further advice from a healthcare practitioner regarding vitamin D for the following reasons:

- under the age of 18;
- already treated for vitamin D deficiency with high dose preparation or have it regularly prescribed for clinical reasons,
- have medical condition where supplementation would require medical supervision (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vitamin-d-supplements-how-to-take-them-safely/vitamin-d-supplements-how-to-take-them-safely>).