

Vitamin D Supplementation for Infants

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that all babies, whether breastfed or bottle fed, should be supplemented with Vitamin D. Vitamin D is important for forming strong bones and for preventing rickets. The current recommendation is to give your baby 400 IU of Vitamin D per day.

Research has shown that many infants (breastfed, formula-fed, or mixed fed) don't take in adequate amounts of vitamin D in their diet. Because of that, I (as your child's doctor) highly recommend giving your baby this necessary vitamin D supplementation. I encourage parents of infants who are either breastfed or drinking less than 1 liter (about 39 ounces) of infant formula per day to give their infants an oral Vitamin D supplement to meet the current recommendation.

As you will see below, another name for Vitamin D (specifically Vitamin D3) is cholecalciferol. I will give your child a prescription of *cholecalciferol 400 units/ml*. It will come with a syringe that you will use to draw 1mL of the supplement and squirt in your child's mouth once daily. I will give you 50mL, which should last you for 50 days. Your child's doctor will need to refill this medication when it runs out. The AAP's recommendation is not limited to newborns. It is now recommended that all infants and children, including adolescents, have a minimum daily intake of 400 IU of vitamin D beginning soon after birth.

If an infant is weaned to vitamin-D fortified infant formula (consuming at least 1000 mL per day) or a child one year of age or older is weaned to vitamin-D fortified milk, then further supplementation is not necessary.

Breastfeeding is the ideal form of infant feeding, but supplementation with Vitamin D, starting soon after birth, is recommended because breastfed infants generally do not obtain adequate Vitamin D from other sources. While formula-fed infants receive Vitamin D supplementation from the formula, studies have found that the amount consumed may not be adequate to meet the recommendation amounts. As such all babies should be supplemented with vitamin D. Of course children and adolescents should be supplemented as well.

Cholecalciferol (By mouth)

Cholecalciferol (koe-le-kal-SIF-er-ol)

Treats vitamin D deficiency and maintains bone strength. This is a dietary supplement.

Brand Name(s):

Carlson Baby Ddrops, Carlson Ddrops, Carlson Vitamin D, Carlson Vitamin D3, Carlson for Kids Ddrops, Children's Replesta, D-3, D-Vita Drops, D3-5, D3-50, Delta D3, Dialyvite Vitamin D3 Max, Mason Natural Vitamin D, Maximum D3, Nature's Blend Super Strength Vitamin D3

There may be other brand names for this medicine.

When This Medicine Should Not Be Used:

This medicine is generally considered safe for most people. Talk to your doctor if you have concerns.

How to Use This Medicine:

Capsule, Liquid Filled Capsule, Liquid, Tablet, Chewable Tablet, Wafer, Drop

- Your doctor will tell you how much medicine to use. Do not use more than directed.
- Follow the instructions on the medicine label if you are using this medicine without a prescription.
- **Oral liquid:** Use the dropper that comes with the package to measure the dose.
 - Adults and adolescents: Drop the liquid directly into the mouth or mix it with food or other liquids (water or juice).
 - Children 2 years of age and older: Drop the liquid directly into the mouth, mix it with food or other liquids (water or juice), or take it from a spoon.
 - Children younger than 2 years of age: Place one drop of the liquid on the pacifier, mother's nipple, or bottle nipple and allow baby to suck for at least 30 seconds.
- **Wafer:** Chew or crush. Do not swallow whole.
- **Missed dose:** Take a dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then and take a regular dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up for a missed dose.
- Store the medicine in a closed container at room temperature, away from heat, moisture, and direct light.

Drugs and Foods to Avoid:

Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products.

Warnings While Using This Medicine:

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Your doctor will check your progress and the effects of this medicine at regular visits. Keep all appointments.
- Keep all medicine out of the reach of children. Never share your medicine with anyone.

Possible Side Effects While Using This Medicine:

Call your doctor right away if you notice any of these side effects:

- Allergic reaction: Itching or hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing

If you notice other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, tell your doctor

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088

Optional additional reading sources:

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/122/5/1142.full>

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/Vitamin-D-Supplementation-for-Infants.aspx>

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/125/4/627.full>

http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/vitamin_d.htm