

Vitamin D for Babies

Starting at 2 weeks of age:

- Adequate vitamin D is critical for developing strong bones. It also helps to reduce the risk of autoimmune conditions, infections and type 2 diabetes.
- While vitamin D is present in some foods, we get most of our vitamin D from the sun's rays. Nature designed babies to get some of their vitamin D from breastmilk and the remainder from sun exposure. However, it is difficult for babies to get adequate direct sun. It is currently recommended that babies younger than six months be kept out of direct sunlight due to the concern of sunburn and increased risk of skin cancer.
- Mothers and babies with darker skin, living in urban areas that are blocked from sunlight or areas with long winter months require even more sun exposure to generate an adequate amount of vitamin D.
- A woman's vitamin D status during pregnancy will directly affect her baby's vitamin D stores at birth which is one reason a multivitamin is recommended during pregnancy. Breastfeeding moms with vitamin D deficiency may not be able to give enough vitamin D to their baby.
- Vitamin D deficiency in babies causes bones to be weak and not form correctly, a condition called rickets. Some children and adults are becoming deficient in vitamin D. Causes include inadequate sources in their diet and inadequate exposure to sun because sunscreen products are recommended for prevention of skin cancer.

Therefore, The Academy of Pediatrics has recommended that all babies, breast or formula fed, receive 400 IU of Vitamin D daily.

Formula fed babies receive 400 IU of Vitamin D in approximately 27 ounces of newborn formula.
Breastfed babies are given a supplement each day.

Baby vitamin D is not a prescription medication. It can be purchased locally or on-line. There are many brands of infant vitamin D supplements.

It is important for you to give your baby the correct amount to equal 400 IU.

Different brands of vitamin D for babies are available in drugstores, Target, Walmart, other stores and on-line.

Babies who are partially breastfed and partially formula fed need a vitamin D supplement, unless the child is receiving 27 ounces or more of formula each day.