

At-risk groups to receive free winter supply of vitamin D

The DHSC have [announced](#) that more than 2.5 million vulnerable people across England will be offered free vitamin D supplements for the winter.

In summary what was stated is as follows:

- All at risk individuals are going to be offered a free 4 month supply of vitamin D to take over the winter months from January 2021
- All care homes will automatically receive a provision for their residents.
- Individuals on the clinically extremely vulnerable list will receive a letter inviting them to **opt in** for a supply to be delivered directly to their homes. Patients on the vulnerable list who wish to opt-in to receive a free supply of vitamin D, will need to register their details between 30 November 2020 and 4 January 2021 at the following link: www.nhs.uk/get-vitamin-d
- The guidance actually states that everyone would probably benefit from taking low dose vitamin D 10 micrograms (400iu) because most people spent a large part of the time during spring/ summer in their homes and therefore may well be deficient to some degree in vitamin D. Patients are recommended to buy Over the counter (OTC) vitamin D if not on one of the above patient groups as per the [national OTC guidance](#) either from a supermarket or community pharmacy.
- Further patient guidance has been produced by NHSE on [vitamin D supplements how to take them safely](#)

The medicines management team have escalated to NHSE today that there are problems with vulnerable patients who do not have access to the computer or the internet will not be able to register for free vitamin D, so we have requested if it would be possible to have an alternative option be provided such as a central telephone number. We have also asked for clarity if there will be a central check to assess which vulnerable patients may be already prescribed vitamin D to avoid duplication of supply and some patients taking vitamin D twice.

As soon as we get further clarity around these points we will circulate the information to all practices

Kind regards

Medicines management team
December 2020