

Islington Public Health Consensus Statement Healthy Start Vitamins – Including Vitamin D

Islington Public Health has recently reviewed their policy on vitamin D and Healthy Start supplementation to reflect the recent guidelines published by Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/537616/SACN_Vitamin_D_and_Health_report.pdf.

Please note that the guidelines presented below have been agreed for Islington taking into account the high proportion of the population that are potentially at risk of vitamin D deficiency and may therefore differ in part from national guidelines.

This consensus statement, dated March 2017, is to confirm that although the SACN guidelines recommend that as a precaution vitamin D should be given from birth, due to the product licence restrictions on the current Healthy Start Vitamins, it has been agreed that they are to be given to children from 4 weeks old.

Islington Public Health provides Healthy Start Vitamins as a universal offer to all Islington residents who meet the listed criteria below:

- All pregnant women and women trying to conceive.
- **ALL babies and children 4 weeks to 4 years**, including *formula fed babies.
- All women, after giving birth, for up to 1 year.

* Formula milk contains vitamin D and therefore formula feeding babies might be advised to delay starting Healthy Start vitamin drops until they are taking less than 500ml formula feed/day. This advice should ONLY be given after the health professional has made an assessment and is assured that the baby is likely to be vitamin D replete (e.g. such as by the mother having taken regular vitamin D supplementation during pregnancy, and the baby not being from a particularly at risk group).

Healthy Start vitamin drops are being reformulated to increase the dose of vitamin D from 7.5mcg to 10mcg and to allow administration to babies from birth. This new formulation is anticipated to be available in September 2018.

Other available vitamin supplements may not be suitable for formula fed babies as they may contain higher levels of vitamins A or D than the Healthy start vitamins and there is a risk that the safe upper limit of intake is exceeded.

Many parents who choose to formula feed buy follow-on formula or growing up and toddler milks and giving Healthy Start vitamins or other vitamin preparations may not be safe alongside these milks due to their higher vitamin content. It is important to inform parents that these formulas are not recommended and only first stage infant formula should be given for 12 months after which cow's milk can be used as part of a varied diet.

This local guidance for Islington has been agreed by Public Health and Islington Medicines Management Committee.

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