

The aim of the Poplar Grove Practice is to provide a high standard of holistic primary care to our entitled patients by working together as a cohesive multi-disciplinary team.

Our commitment to you, our patients, is to provide you with the highest possible standard of medical care with an efficiently run and friendly service. You will be treated as an individual with dignity, courtesy and respect at all times, irrespective of your ethnic origin, religious belief, sex or sexuality, personal attributes or the nature of your health problems. We expect to be treated in the same way.



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0800 - 1230 and 1400 - 1830



## Patient Information Leaflet

### Vitamin D

**[www.poplar-grove.nhs.uk](http://www.poplar-grove.nhs.uk)**

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# Vitamin D

Vitamin D plays an important role in keeping bones healthy. Lack of vitamin D can lead to bone deformities, such as rickets in children and bone pain and tenderness as a result of osteomalacia in adults. Vitamin D deficiency is also associated with increased risk of fractures and falls in older people.

The main source of vitamin D is from sunlight (UVB). The sun between 11 and 2pm in the summer months provides sufficient vitamin D as long as you have 10-15 minutes of sun exposure to your skin each day before applying sun protection cream.

From October to March in the UK the sun is not 'strong enough' and will not provide enough vitamin D unless you have a 'boost' of sun with a winter sun holiday.



Although vitamin D can be obtained from some food sources such as oily fish and some breakfast cereals and egg yolk, it only provides about 10% of the amount needed and the sun is the most important provider of vitamin D in our bodies.

The recommendation for all adults and children from the age of 1 year is to self-supplement with vitamin D, 10 mcg capsules (400 units) vitamin D from October to March every year.

These are widely available in most chemists and many stores including Wilkinsons, Superdrug and Boots.

For those who have darker skin tones it is recommended by the scientific advisory committee on nutrition (SACN) to take 10mcg-12.5mcg of vitamin D daily all year long.



## How common is vitamin D deficiency?

It is very common. A recent survey in the UK showed that more than half of adults in the UK did not have enough vitamin D. In the winter and spring about 1 in 6 people have a severe deficiency. It is estimated that about 9 in 10 adults in the UK of South Asian origin may be vitamin D-deficient. Most affected people either don't have any symptoms, or have tiredness or vague aches and pains, and are unaware of the problem.

## What are the symptoms of vitamin D deficiency?

Many people have no symptoms, or may complain of only vague ones such as tiredness or general aches. Because symptoms of vitamin D deficiency are often very nonspecific or vague, the problem is often missed. The diagnosis is more easily reached in severe deficiencies with some of the classical (typical) symptoms and bone deformities.