

Self Care Information for Patients: Vitamins and Minerals

Summary

Vitamins and Minerals are readily available to buy at low cost, from community pharmacies (and other retail outlets) and so will not routinely be prescribed on the NHS unless for specific medical conditions.

What can you do to help?

- Eat a varied, balanced diet to obtain your daily requirement of vitamins and minerals.
- Seek advice from a community pharmacist if you are unsure whether you need Vitamin and Mineral supplements. In some instances, taking certain Vitamins and Minerals for a long time can sometimes be harmful.
- If you are pregnant, breast feeding or have a child under 5 years of age and in receipt of benefits, you may be eligible to receive Health Start® Vitamin supplements for free.

When shall I see a General Practitioner (GP)?

There are some exceptions whereby a GP can prescribe these preparations:

- Medically diagnosed deficiency.
- Osteoporosis
- Malnutrition
- Surgery or chronic conditions that cause malabsorption.

Further information

- Healthy Start: healthystart.nhs.uk
- Vitamins in pregnancy: nhs.uk-Vitamins, supplements and nutrition in pregnancy
- BDA Food Facts Supplements: bda.uk.com
- Public Health England Eatwell Guide: gov.uk
- BDA Food Facts 5 a day: bda.uk.com

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