

Government recommendations for vitamins for males and females aged 1 – 18 years³

Age (years)	1		2 - 3		4 - 6		7 - 10		11 - 14		15 - 18	
Gender	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Vitamin A (µg/day)*	400	400	400	400	400	400	500	500	600	600	700	600
Thiamin (mg/day)	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	0.8
Riboflavin (mg/day)	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1
Niacin equivalent (mg/day)	5.0	4.7	7.2	6.6	9.8	9.1	12.0	11.2	16.5	13.2	16.5	13.2
Vitamin B ₆ (mg/day)	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.5	1.2
Vitamin B ₁₂ (µg/day)	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.5
Folate (µg/day)**	70	70	70	70	100	100	150	150	200	200	200	200
Vitamin C (mg/day)*	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	35	35	40	40
Vitamin D (µg/day)***	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

³The figures in this table should be used in conjunction with the following information:

Vitamin figures were obtained from Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom (1991) and from SACN Vitamin D and Health (2016).

Dietary Reference Values for certain nutrients are not available for children below the age of 5 years.

Niacin equivalent and thiamin figures were calculated using the energy figures derived from SACN Dietary Reference Values for Energy (2011). Niacin equivalent = niacin + (tryptophan divided by 60)

*Vitamins A and C: The government recommends that children aged from six months up to five years of age are given a vitamin supplement of vitamins A and C, often provided in a combined supplement with vitamin D. This is a precautionary measure, to ensure that their requirements for these nutrients are met, at a time when it is difficult to be certain that the diet provides a reliable source. Babies fed infant formula should not be given a vitamin supplement until they are receiving less than 500ml (about a pint) of infant formula a day, because infant formula is fortified with certain nutrients, including vitamins A and C.

**Folate: it is recommended that women of child bearing age take a 400µg folic acid supplement daily until the 12th week of pregnancy. This is to help prevent birth defects of the central nervous system, such as spina bifida, in your baby. If there is a family history of conditions like spina bifida (known as neural tube defects), a higher dose of 5mg of folic acid each day may be needed until the 12th week of pregnancy. This is available on prescription from your GP. Women with diabetes and those taking anti-epileptic medicines should speak to their GP for advice, as they may also need to take a higher dose of folic acid.

***Vitamin D: The Department of Health recommends that breastfed babies from birth to one year of age should be given a daily supplement containing 8.5 to 10µg of vitamin D, to make sure they get enough. Babies fed infant formula should not be given a vitamin D supplement until they are receiving less than 500ml (about a pint) of infant formula a day, because infant formula is fortified with vitamin D. Children aged 1 to 4 years old should be given a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D.

As vitamin D is found only in a small number of foods, it might be difficult to get enough from foods that naturally contain vitamin D and/or fortified foods alone. So everyone, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D. Between late March/April to the end of September, the majority of people aged five years and above will probably obtain sufficient vitamin D from sunlight when they are outdoors. So you might choose not to take a vitamin D supplement during these months.

However, some groups of people will not get enough vitamin D from sunlight because they have very little or no sunshine exposure. So the Department of Health recommends that people should take a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D throughout the year if they are not often outdoors, such as those who are frail or housebound; are in an institution such as a care home; usually wear clothes that cover up most of their skin when outdoors. People from minority ethnic groups with dark skin, such as those of African, African-Caribbean or South Asian origin, might not get enough vitamin D from sunlight – so they should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D throughout the year.

Table from : Government Dietary Recommendations. Government recommendations for energy and nutrients for males and females aged 1 – 18 years and 19+ years. (2016) Public Health England.

Government recommendations for vitamins for males and females aged 19+ years⁴

Age (years)	19 - 64		65 - 74		75+	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Vitamin A (µg/day)	700	600	700	600	700	600
Thiamin (mg/day)	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.7
Riboflavin (mg/day)	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.1
Niacin equivalent (mg/day)	16.5	13.2	15.5	12.6	15.1	12.1
Vitamin B ₆ (mg/day)	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2
Vitamin B ₁₂ (µg/day)	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Folate (µg/day)*	200	200	200	200	200	200
Vitamin C (mg/day)	40	40	40	40	40	40
Vitamin D (µg/day)**	10	10	10	10	10	10

⁴The figures in this table should be used in conjunction with the following information:

Vitamin figures were obtained from Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom (1991) and SACN Vitamin D and Health (2016).

Niacin equivalent and thiamin figures were calculated using the energy figures derived from SACN Dietary Reference Values for Energy (2011). Niacin equivalent = niacin + (tryptophan divided by 60)

*Folate: it is recommended that women of child bearing age take a 400µg folic acid supplement daily until the 12th week of pregnancy. This is to help prevent birth defects of the central nervous system, such as spina bifida, in your baby. If there is a family history of conditions like spina bifida (known as neural tube defects), a higher dose of 5mg of folic acid each day may be needed until the 12th week of pregnancy. This is available on prescription from your GP. Women with diabetes and those taking anti-epileptic medicines should speak to their GP for advice, as they may also need to take a higher dose of folic acid.

*Vitamin D: As vitamin D is found only in a small number of foods, it might be difficult to get enough from foods that naturally contain vitamin D and/or fortified foods alone. So everyone, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D. Between late March/April to the end of September, the majority of people aged five years and above will probably obtain sufficient vitamin D from sunlight when they are outdoors. So you might choose not to take a vitamin D supplement during these months.

However, some groups of people will not get enough vitamin D from sunlight because they have very little or no sunshine exposure. So the Department of Health recommends that people should take a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D throughout the year if they are not often outdoors, such as those who are frail or housebound; are in an institution such as a care home; usually wear clothes that cover up most of their skin when outdoors. People from minority ethnic groups with dark skin, such as those of African, African-Caribbean or South Asian origin, might not get enough vitamin D from sunlight – so they should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10µg of vitamin D throughout the year.

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