NHS Grampian

Westholme
Woodend Hospital
Queens Road
ABERDEEN
AB15 6LS

Date: 01/04/2022
Our Ref: FA/COVID19_Guide_VitaminD
Enquiries to: Lesley Coyle
Extension: 56525
Direct Line: 01224 556525
Email: gram.medicinesmanagement@nhs.scot

This letter authorises the extended use of the following guideline until December 2022

Primary Care Prescribing Group Vitamin D (All Ages): Advice For Prescribers - COVID-19 Update

This guideline remains clinically accurate and relevant.

If you have any queries regarding this please do not hesitate to contact the Pharmacy and Medicines Directorate.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Coyle
Chair of Medicines Guidelines and Policies Group
Primary Care Prescribing Group
Vitamin D (All Ages): Advice For Prescribers

COVID-19 Update

Vitamin D should not be routinely prescribed unless there is a diagnosed clinical reason to do so.

Key messages

- Vitamin D should **not** be routinely prescribed unless there is a diagnosed clinical reason to do so. **Self-care advice** should be provided for all patients enquiring about vitamin D supplementation who are asymptomatic and have no risk factors.
- Vitamin D supplements for babies, children and adults can be purchased in pharmacies or supermarkets.
- Certain patient groups are eligible for free vitamin D supplementation via the Healthy Start Scheme. Full details can be found [here](#) and eligible patients should be referred to their health visitor or midwife - where this is not practical they can be advised to purchase vitamin D.
- Scottish Government have, via letters send in late October 2020, offered free supplies of vitamin D to individuals previously asked to shield or who are now on the list of those considered at higher risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).

Background

- Vitamin D is essential for bone health. The majority of the body’s vitamin D stores are obtained from the skin’s exposure to sunlight and a small amount is absorbed via an individual’s diet.
- In Scotland, due to seasonal availability of sunlight, it is advised that the general population prophylactically supplement with vitamin D.
- The Scottish Government has updated its guidance regarding vitamin D supplementation in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic and the need for the Scottish people to remain at home. The full guidance can be found [here](#).

Current Guidance

- The Scottish Government has suggested that people of all age groups should consider taking a vitamin D supplement of 10 micrograms (400 units) daily.
- This advice is of particular importance for individuals who spend most, if not all of their day indoors, e.g. shielding patients.
- Current guidance on sun exposure should be followed: 10 to 15 minutes of unprotected Scottish sun exposure is safe for all.

Care home residents

- NHS Grampian do not recommend the routine prescribing of vitamin D for residents of care homes, unless there is a clinically diagnosed reason to do so.
- There is an expectation that all care home providers ensure a healthy balanced diet for residents to ensure adequate intake of vitamin D.