



# Vitamin D

Opus has prepared this information to help care homes understand and implement the Department of Health and Social guidance on the provision and supplementation of Vitamin D in care homes in England

## Introduction

Guidance was issued on 15th January 2021 by the Department of Health and Social Care regarding the provision and supplementation of Vitamin D for residents in residential and nursing care homes in England to help support their general health, in particular bone and muscle health.

The updated guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vitamin-d-for-vulnerable-groups/vitamin-d-and-care-homes-guidance>

## How Opus Can Help You

- 1 We know it is hard to navigate through pages of guidance and so we have produced an easy-read summary of the guidance for you.
- 2 We have produced a checklist for you to complete to make sure you have completed all the tasks necessary before implementing the guidance.

## Why is Vitamin D Important for Care Home Residents?

- ➔ Vitamin D helps regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body. These nutrients are needed for bone and muscle health
- ➔ A lack of Vitamin D can lead to bone pain and muscle weakness, which may also increase the risk of falls



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## Why Has This Guidance Been Developed?

- ➔ Most people are able to get the Vitamin D they need from sunlight as the body creates Vitamin D from direct sunlight on the skin when outdoors
- ➔ During the autumn and winter months a Vitamin D supplement is recommended as people can't obtain enough Vitamin D from sunlight
- ➔ For care home residents, a daily supplement throughout the year is often recommended as residents are more likely to have been indoors over spring and summer
- ➔ This advice is particularly important for people who have been shielding due to coronavirus or residents of care homes

Due to the factors described above, the Department of Health and Social Care has prioritised the provision of free Vitamin D supplements for care home residents in England



Advice to care homes regarding nutrients and menu planning can be found in [Healthier and more sustainable catering: nutrition principles](#)

## For further support or advice, contact us:

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