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Vitamin D Supplementation for Infants

Why Vitamin D Is Important

Vitamin D plays a key role in:

- Healthy bone growth
- Immune system support
- Helping the body absorb calcium
- Overall wellness and development

Breast milk typically contains <50 IU of vitamin D per quart, which is far below the recommended amount for infants. Because of this, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends ensuring every baby receives enough vitamin D every day.

AAP Recommendation

The AAP recommends **all infants receive 400 IU of vitamin D_3 per day,** beginning the first few days of life —whether breastfed, formula-fed, or both. Parents can meet this requirement in one of two ways:

Option 1: Supplement exclusively breastfeeding mom

Suggested Maternal Dose (Maternal supplementation can transfer vitamin D through breast milk)

- 6,400 IU/day total (Anything between 6,000–7,000 IU/day generally provides adequate transfer.)
- Check your prenatal vitamin to see how much vitamin D is already included. Add only the amount needed to reach ~6,400 IU/day.

Important Notes

- Though safe, the AAP routine recommendation is supplementing the infant directly, as that guarantees a known dose.
- Supplement must be reliably taken every day.
- If a maternal dose is missed, supplement the infant instead to ensure coverage.

Choose a 3rd-Party Verified (USP/NSF/ConsumerLab) supplement to ensure purity and correct dosing. Examples include:

- Nature Made Vitamin D_3 (USP Verified)
- Kirkland Signature Vitamin D_3 (USP Verified)
- Nordic Naturals Vitamin D_3 (3rd-party tested)

Option 2: Supplement the Infant Directly

Dose for Infants

- 400 IU (1 mL or 1 drop depending on brand) once daily

Give daily to:

- Fully breastfed infants
- Partially breastfed infants
- Formula-fed infants who drink less than 32 oz/day of vitamin-D–fortified formula

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Reference: American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), HealthyChildren.org

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When Infants *No Longer* Need Vitamin D Drops

- **<12 months**:
  - **Formula or combo fed**: Supplement with **400 IU of vitamin D_3 per day** until they take 32 oz of vitamin-D–fortified formula/day or reach 12 months (see > 12 months)
  - **Exclusively breastfed**: Supplement with **400 IU of vitamin D_3 per day** until 12 months old (see > 12 months)
- >**12 months:** Once babies transition to whole milk, they still need **600 IU/day** of vitamin D. Most toddlers *do not* drink 32 oz of milk, so need vitamin D supplementation until they reliably get 600 IU/day from diet + milk.

Choose a 3rd-Party Verified (USP/NSF/ConsumerLab) supplement to ensure purity and correct dosing. Examples include:

- Baby Ddrops Liquid Vitamin D_3
- Nordic Naturals Baby's Vitamin D_3 Liquid
- Mother's Bliss Vitamin D Organic Drops
- D Drops Baby Organic Liquid Vitamin D_3
- Enfamil D-Vi-Sol – though not "USP-Verified" or NSF-certified, the company does run rigorous internal quality control consistent with FDA requirements for infant products.

Tip: If the dropper is "one-drop dosing," place one drop on your nipple, on a pacifier, or directly into baby's mouth. Or, If you express milk and feed in a bottle, it is OK to add the vitamin to your breast milk.

Which Option Should You Choose?

Both options are backed by research and safe when used correctly. In general:

Choose maternal supplementation if:

- You are exclusively breastfeeding
- You reliably take daily supplements
- You prefer not to give infant drops

Choose infant supplementation if:

- You want guaranteed dosing accuracy
- You mix feed, exclusively formula feed, or supplement routine varies
- You have twins or multiples (each infant needs their own 400 IU)

Safety Tips

- Do not give more than 400 IU/day unless instructed by your provider.
- Avoid "mega-dose" liquid vitamins with multiple ingredients.
- Use only vitamin D_3 (cholecalciferol) unless your provider advises otherwise.
- Keep supplements out of reach of children.

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