

MID AND SOUTH ESSEX MEDICINES OPTIMISATION COMMITTEE (MSEMOC)

VITAMINS AND MINERALS (UNLESS FOR MEDICALLY DIAGNOSED DEFICIENCY) **BLACK: NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PRESCRIBING IN PRIMARY, COMMUNITY OR SECONDARY CARE**

Mid and South Essex CCGs do not support the prescribing of vitamins and minerals unless indicated for medically diagnosed deficiency. Prescribing of vitamins and minerals is a low clinical priority and is only appropriate in the management of medically diagnosed deficiency, including for those patients who may have a lifelong or chronic condition or have undergone surgery that results in malabsorption. Continuing need should however be reviewed on a regular basis. Prescribing as dietary supplements or as a general "pick-me-up" is not supported. This position is supported by NHS England guidance on conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.

There is insufficient high quality evidence to demonstrate the clinical effectiveness of vitamins and minerals. Vitamins and minerals are essential nutrients which most people can and should get from eating a healthy, varied and balanced diet. Patients should be advised that this can be achieved by eating a balance of starchy foods (wholegrain where possible) with plenty of fruit and vegetables (at least five portions a day), some protein rich foods, some milk and dairy foods, and not too much fat, salt or sugar. This will provide all of the nutrients needed. The [Eatwell Guide](#) is a useful tool which can be used to demonstrate to people how a healthy, varied and balanced diet can be achieved and what proportion of each food type should be consumed.

Vitamins to supplement a patient's dietary preference or avoidance of certain food groups are not supported for prescribing and should be purchased, such as vegan, vegetarian, diet due to religious beliefs, food preferences or dislikes.

Recommendations:

- Recommend eating a healthy, varied and balanced diet which includes a balance of starchy foods, plenty of fruit and vegetables, some protein rich foods, some milk and dairy foods, and not too much fat, salt or sugar, to provide the vitamins and minerals required.
- Do not initiate new prescriptions for vitamin and mineral preparations unless they are for the management of medically diagnosed deficiency.
- Some patients may be eligible for help to buy healthy food and milk (Healthy Start card). The Healthy Start card can also be used to collect Healthy Start vitamins (during pregnancy and breastfeeding and for children under four years old). For further information: [Healthy Start](#)
- Review all patients prescribed vitamin and mineral preparations and ensure that all prescribing is for a medically diagnosed deficiency and not as dietary supplements or as a general "pick-me-up".
- Discontinue prescribing of vitamins and minerals for patients who are not being treated for a medically diagnosed deficiency.
- Patients that wish to continue taking vitamins and minerals for dietary supplementation or as a "pick-me-up" should be advised that they can be purchased as self-care over the counter with the support of the community pharmacist.
- Certain patients with malnutrition may require a vitamin and mineral supplementation. Malnutrition is not covered by this position statement.
- Please also refer to the MSEMOC position statement on multivitamins and minerals post bariatric surgery.

There may be individual patients where the clinician considers that their ability to self-manage is compromised as a consequence of medical, mental health or significant social vulnerability to the extent that their health and/or wellbeing could be adversely affected if reliant on self-care.

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Mid and South Essex CCGs are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, as detailed in the medicines management service specification of their contract.



Vitamins/minerals/supplements - this list is not exhaustive	
Approved to prescribe	Do not prescribe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thiamine - for prevention or treatment of Wernicke's encephalopathy in alcohol dependence • Hydroxocobalamin • Vitamin D - high dose to correct deficiency • Vitamin E - deficiency in cholestatis, severe liver disease, cystic fibrosis, abetalipoproteinaemia • Folic acid 5mg - for use with methotrexate or for high risk in pregnancy (e.g. epilepsy, BMI > 30) • Iron - iron deficiency anaemia • Pyridoxine - with isoniazid for tuberculosis treatment • Renavit - in renal failure patients receiving dialysis • Ketovite - specialist dietitian recommendation only • DEKAs Essential capsules, DEKAs Plus Chewable tablets, DEKAs Plus liquid, DEKAs Plus Softgels - for patients with cystic fibrosis on the recommendation of a specialist in cystic fibrosis • Alfacalcidol • Calcium and vitamin D - for osteoporosis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cod liver oil • Vitamin B - if used as a general "pick me up" • Vitamin B compound tablets and vitamin B compound strong tablets (except for people at high risk of developing refeeding syndrome following specialist advice) • Cyanocobalamin (vitamin B12) • Riboflavin (vitamin B2) - for any indication including migraine prophylaxis, non-epileptic seizures and chronic fatigue • Nicotinamide • Biotin • Pyridoxine • Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) • Vitamin D - maintenance and insufficiency doses • Vitamin E - including as part of IVF treatment, osteonecrosis of the jaw • Folic acid supplementation • Magnesium salts or preparations - for indications other than replacement or to correct deficiency • Selenium • Tonics • Homeopathic remedies • General multivitamins (any brands e.g. Centrum, Seven Seas products, Haliborange, stores own brands) • Abidec, Dalivit • Forceval • Ketovite - without specialist recommendation • Coenzyme Q10 (ubiquinone) • Evening primrose oil

References	NHS England Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs (March 2018): https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf PrescQIPP Bulletin 107: Vitamins and minerals (DROP-List) (September 2015): https://www.prescqipp.info/our-resources/bulletins/bulletin-107-vitamins-and-minerals-drop-list/ The Eatwell Guide: http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/goodfood/Pages/the-eatwell-guide.aspx NHS Get help to buy food and milk (The Healthy Start scheme): https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/
Acknowledgements	Mid and South Essex CCGs Medicines Management Teams
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