

## **Vitamin D Insufficiency (low Vitamin D Levels)**

If your recent blood result shows that you have a low vitamin D level. Vitamin D is needed to absorb calcium to make healthy bones. Low vitamin D can produce various symptoms such as bone pain, muscle weakness and tiredness. It is therefore important to ensure you are getting enough Vitamin D. The main source of Vitamin D is from sunlight, this does not require you to sunbathe but we would recommend exposing your face and forearms for about 15 minutes most days in the summer between 11am to 3pm without sunscreen. There are a few foods that contain vitamin D with the most significant amount in oily fish such as salmon and tuna. Small amounts are available in eggs, and fortified breakfast cereals. In many cases it is not possible for everyone to obtain enough Vitamin D through sunlight and diet alone. In your case we would advise you to continue on a vitamin D supplement lifelong. It is likely that you may experience symptoms of muscle weakness, bone pain, general tiredness if your vitamin D levels remain low. This may also increase your risk of osteoporosis, a condition which causes 'thinning of the bones' and increases your risk of bone fractures in old age. Please remember that Vitamin D is used to absorb calcium into the bones. It is therefore important to consume foods that have enough calcium which is often found in dairy products and fortified breakfast cereals. If you feel your intake of these foods is low then please speak to a doctor as you may require calcium supplements as well as vitamin D. We would recommend you take a supplement containing 1000units (25mcg) of vitamin D daily lifelong. Pharmacies will sell the appropriate vitamin D supplement and are aware of the correct dose and frequency that you require for this condition. This costs approximately 50p per month to purchase.