
Discharge Instructions: Giving Your Newborn Liquid Vitamin Supplements

Liquid vitamin supplements are prescribed for many babies when they leave the hospital. This is especially common for breastfed babies. The most common vitamin supplement for babies is vitamin D. Human, or mom's, milk contains only small amounts of vitamin D. Formula has added vitamins, including vitamin D. Vitamin D prevents a bone disease called rickets. Your baby may also need vitamins if they were born early, or have certain health conditions. A breastfed baby may need extra vitamins if the mother eats a vegan diet. This type of diet can be low in vitamins B12 and D.

Vitamin supplements will help your baby grow and develop normally. They are given to your baby in addition to regular feedings. They are not meant to replace regular feedings.

Tips for giving liquid vitamins

- Use the dropper that comes with the liquid vitamins. Don't fill the whole dropper. Only fill it as much as prescribed. More is not better. Giving the baby more than is prescribed will not improve their development. It also could be harmful.
- Squirt the liquid gently on the inside of your child's cheek. Don't squirt it in the back of the throat. This can cause your baby to choke.
- If your baby won't take the vitamins from the dropper, mix them with a small amount of formula or expressed milk in a bottle. Don't fill the bottle. Instead, just fill the nipple. If you fill the bottle and your baby doesn't drink it all, not all the vitamins will be given.
- If your baby spits up or vomits with a feeding, you don't need to give another dose of the vitamins. But if this happens every time you give the vitamins, contact your child's healthcare provider.
- If you have any questions, ask your child's healthcare provider.

Your baby's daily needs

Write down the amounts prescribed for your baby in the spaces below. Your baby's healthcare provider can show you what these amounts look like on the dropper that comes with the liquid vitamins.

My baby should have _____ mL of vitamins _____ times a day.