

Healthy Start Vitamins

Healthy Start for you and your baby

Healthy Start is a UK-wide government scheme to improve the health of pregnant women and families with children under 4 who are on benefits or low incomes. It is a wonderful source of information on healthy eating and the benefits of breastfeeding.

Eligible families can receive vouchers for milk, fruit and vegetables which can be exchanged at local retailers who are participating in the scheme. At your local Children's Centre you can exchange your vouchers for vitamins for women and children.

Do You Qualify for Free Vitamins?

Do you receive any of the following?

- Income Support
- Job Based Jobseekers
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or
- Child Tax Credit and have a family income of less than £16,190 (not working tax credit)



If you are a pregnant woman, woman with a baby under one and children from 6-months to 4-years who receive monthly Healthy Start food vouchers, you can claim Healthy Start vitamins. The vitamin vouchers are sent to you every 8-weeks and can be picked up from your local Sure Start Children's Centre or alternatively from your Health Visitor.

You will also receive a voucher to help towards the cost of fruit, vegetables and milk with the Healthy Start Scheme.

Just fill out the application form, available from the Documents & Downloads section on your local Action for Children website.

To find out where you can spend your vouchers please visit <http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>.

What are Healthy Start Vitamins?

Vitamins are essential nutrients that your body needs in small amounts so that it can work properly. Even though you can get lots of vitamins from a healthy balanced diet, you still might not get everything you need at certain times in your life - such as when you're pregnant, a new mum or a small child. So UK health departments recommend that at these times you should take a supplement containing specific vitamins to make sure you get everything you need.

Healthy Start vitamins are suitable for vegetarians and free from milk, egg, gluten, soya and peanut residues. The vitamin drops are for children from 6-months old or who are having less than 500ml (one pint) of infant formula a day. Babies under 6-months old who are fully breastfed might benefit from them earlier - ask your midwife or health visitor for advice.

Healthy Start women's vitamin tables contain:

- **Folic acid:** reduces the chance of your baby having spina bifida, a birth defect where the spine doesn't form properly.
- **Vitamin C:** helps maintain healthy tissue in the body.
- **Vitamin D:** helps your body to absorb calcium and so supports your baby's bones to develop properly.

Healthy Start children's vitamin drops contain:

- **Vitamin A:** for growth, vision in dim light and healthy skin
- **Vitamin C:** helps maintain healthy tissue in the body
- **Vitamin D:** for strong bones and teeth.