

What is the first sign of Vitamin A deficiency?

The difficulty or inability to see in dim light such as at dusk, dawn or at night 'night blindness'.

What is night blindness?

Night blindness is when a someone sees dimly or does not see at all in the dark.

Can one detect vitamin A deficiency before it becomes serious?

No, a child can appear to be in good health and still have a low level of vitamin A.

Who becomes blind as a result of vitamin A deficiency?

Young children aged 6 to 59 months are generally at risk especially if they get measles.

Why are under-five cards important in for vitamin A capsules?

The under-five cards help health workers identify any child who needs vitamin A capsule but has not yet received one.



What about children who are breastfed only, how will they get Vitamin A?

Breast milk contains vitamin A which protects children against infections that is why new mothers need to be given vitamin A capsule soon after delivery. Breast milk is the best food for babies. Mothers should give babies only breast milk for the first six months of life and then start adding a complementary food.



Vitamin



What is vitamin A?

It is a substance that is essential for the body required in very small amounts.

How is vitamin A important for good health?

Vitamin A helps the body to resist infections, ensuring that children grow well and have good sight and reduces child deaths.

What is vitamin A deficiency (VAD)?

Vitamin A deficiency occurs when the body's vitamin A reserves are low.

Who is most at risk of vitamin A deficiency?

Children under 5 years, infants who are not breastfed, pregnant women and lactating women.

What causes vitamin A deficiency?

Vitamin A deficiency is caused by an insufficient intake of vitamin A rich foods, an insufficient absorption of vitamin A or a depletion of the body's vitamin A reserves following measles or chronic diarrhea.

Is Vitamin A deficiency preventable?

Yes, it is preventable

How can one prevent vitamin A deficiency?

By taking vitamin A capsules and eating foods rich in vitamin A.

What are these foods?

Liver, egg yolks, milk, fish, oranges, fruits, carrots, pumpkin, mangoes pawpaw, green leaves, sweet potato, greens palm oil.



Children's diets should include a variety of these foods to prevent vitamin A deficiency and illness.



What are vitamin A capsules?

They are egg shaped, small capsules in two colors; blue and red. The blue is 100,000 IU and

the red is 200,000 IU.

What is the recommended dose?

Children 6-11 months 1 blue capsule

Children 12-59 months: 1 red capsule

New mothers 1 red capsule

Who should take vitamin A capsules?

Children at six months of age and every six months until they are 5 years old and women who have just delivered a baby.

Are Vitamin A capsules free of charge?

Yes, vitamin A capsules are free during health campaigns and in all government health facilities in Sierra Leone.

Who will take Vitamin A capsules in this "Welbodi" week?

All children aged 6-59 months should receive vitamin A capsules.



Where can I get Vitamin A capsule?

In the "Welbodi" week, volunteers will visit your house to give children Vitamin A capsule and de-worming medicine. Vitamin A capsules are also available in all health facilities in SL.

How often should children receive Vitamin A capsules?

Children 6-59 months should receive Vitamin A capsules at 6 months and every six months until they reach 5 years of age in routine and twice yearly campaigns.

Are vitamin A capsules used to treat other diseases?

Yes, vitamin A capsules are used to treat children with chronic diarrhea, measles, severe cough and cold and under nutrition. Take your child to the health center when sick for correct treatment.

Why is it important to give vitamin A to children suffering from measles, chronic diarrhea or under-nutrition?

Vitamin A reserves are often low when a child is suffering from measles, chronic diarrhea or malnutrition. Vitamin A capsules can restore a child's vitamin A reserves and greatly increase a child's chances of survival.

Do adults get vitamin A deficiency?

Yes, anyone can suffer from vitamin A deficiency. Pregnant women and breastfeeding women are the most vulnerable. Most other adults have enough vitamin A reserves.

Are Vitamin A capsules given to adults?

Mothers should receive vitamin A capsule immediately after delivery or at least within six weeks of delivery to protect themselves and the breastfed newborn from illness.