

Infant Vitamin/Mineral Supplements

Premature infants have increased vitamin and mineral needs. It is important that you provide your infant with additional vitamins and minerals if the amount of formula and/or breast milk your baby is receiving does not meet 100% of his/her needs. The most important vitamins and minerals for a newborn infant are vitamin D, vitamin A and iron. Most newborn babies cannot drink enough formula or breast milk to provide them with enough of these important nutrients. Even term infants who are receiving mostly breast milk require additional vitamin D and sometimes iron as breast milk contains very little of these two nutrients.

Infant vitamin/mineral supplements can be purchased over the counter and are available at most pharmacies and discount stores (such as CVS, Walgreens, Target and Wal-Mart). They can also be purchased on-line. Infant vitamin/mineral supplements are not regulated by the FDA, so it is important that you purchase from a reputable company. A few brands that have been independently tested for purity and content are the Enfamil®, Rugby®, Biotics Research® and Ddrops® brands.

Below are the common supplements recommended for newborn infants:

Poly-vi-Sol or Poly-vi-Sol with iron: Poly-vi-Sol products are a vitamin/mineral supplement that contains important vitamins for growth and development such as vitamins A, D, C, E and some B vitamins. Read the labels on the Poly-vi-Sol products carefully. If it is recommended that you give your baby additional iron you need to select the Poly-vi-Sol with added iron. Poly-vi-Sol with iron will provide 10 mg of iron per 1 mL drop. You may be instructed to give your baby between ½- 1 drop per day (0.5-1 ml). Be sure to measure carefully as too much or too little can be harmful to your infant.

Tri-vi-Sol or Tri-vi-Sol with iron: Tri-vi-Sol products are a vitamin/mineral supplement that provides just 3 of the most common vitamins: vitamins A, D and C. Read the labels on the Tri-vi-Sol products carefully. If it is recommended that you give your baby additional iron you need to select the Tri-vi-Sol with added iron. Tri-vi-Sol with iron will provide 10 mg of iron per 1 mL drop. You may be instructed to give your baby between ½- 1 drop per day (0.5-1 ml). Be sure to measure carefully as too much or too little can be harmful to your infant.

Fer-in-Sol: Fer-in-Sol products are a supplement that provides a single mineral: iron. Fer-in-Sol will provide 15 mg of iron per 1 mL drop. You may be instructed to give your baby between ¼ - 1 drop per day (0.25-1 ml). Be sure to measure carefully as too much or too little can be harmful to your infant.

Vitamin D: Vitamin D is a nutrient that is very important for growth and disease prevention. All infant receiving breast milk or insufficient amounts of formula require additional vitamin D. Vitamin D supplements are available as either a 1 mL drop (dosed with a dropper) or a concentrated micro-drop that can be placed on a finger or nipple and placed into baby's mouth.

Once your baby is able to take approximately 25-30 ounces of formula (1 L) or adequate amounts of table foods, you may be able to decrease or discontinue some or all of the recommended supplements. Your pediatrician will be able to assist you in the appropriate selection/discontinuation of vitamin/mineral supplements after discharge home.

Images of some commonly recommended infant supplements

