

Going home on vitamins (Abidec)

Information for children, families and carers

We have given you this factsheet because we have prescribed your baby multivitamin drops. We usually use a multivitamin drop called Abidec, but we sometimes use other multivitamins when Abidec is not available. This factsheet explains what Abidec is, how it works and what the potential side effects are. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is Abidec?

Abidec is a multivitamin drop that contains vitamins A, B, C and D.

Why does my baby need this medicine?

We have prescribed your baby Abidec because they were born prematurely (before the 37th week of pregnancy). Babies who are born at less than 36 weeks need extra vitamins during their first year of life because the stores of vitamins in their bodies are low. Vitamins are essential for your baby's health and development, and although breast milk and formula milk contain some vitamins, they do not contain enough for a growing premature baby.

Are there any side effects?

Abidec can cause your baby to 'gag' due to the taste (if this happens, please speak to your health visitor, GP or the neonatal team at your baby's next appointment).

However, when given at the advised doses, Abidec is unlikely to cause any other side effects. If you think your baby is experiencing any side effects, please speak to your GP.

How and when should I give my baby Abidec?

- Abidec is usually started when your baby can tolerate milk feeds.
- Measure the correct dose (see Dosage section below) using the syringe provided and place a drop on the back of your baby's tongue **once** a day. Try to give the medicine about the same time each day, so it becomes part of your baby's routine.

Dosage

If your baby is under 12 months and having breast milk, formula milk or a prescribed hydrolysed formula

You should give your baby 0.6ml of Abidec each day. This is higher than the dose on the packet, as premature babies need higher doses of vitamins, particularly vitamin D. If a different multivitamin drop is used, the amount that should be given may be different. You will be told the amount to give before you leave hospital.

If your baby is over 12 months

You can give your baby a vitamin supplement following the instructions and dose on the product packaging (for example, Abidec or Healthy Start vitamins).

How should I store Abidec?

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard away from heat and direct sunlight, and out of the sight and reach of children.
- Dispose of the medicine bottle and any remaining contents four weeks after opening it. It's a good idea to make a note of the date you first opened it.
- Make sure the medicine has not reached its 'best before' or 'use by' date.

What should I do if my baby is sick (vomits)?

Wait until the next dose of Abidec is due and give the normal amount. **Do not** give your baby a second or double dose.

What if I accidentally give my baby too much Abidec?

Contact your GP or call NHS 111 for advice if you think you have given your baby too much medicine. Never give your baby a higher dose than has been prescribed as it can be dangerous.

How do I get more Abidec?

We will give you a bottle of Abidec when you and your baby leave hospital, which will last four weeks. Once you are home, you will need to contact your GP for a repeat prescription.

How long will my baby need to take Abidec for?

Your baby will need Abidec until they are one year old.

The Department of Health recommends vitamins A, C and D for all children between the ages of one and five years old. These can be bought from most supermarkets, or you may be eligible for NHS Healthy Start children's vitamins. It is unlikely that your GP will continue prescribing vitamins once your baby is over one year old, unless they have a specific vitamin deficiency that needs treatment.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Neonatal community outreach team (NCOT)

Telephone: **07766 994816** (Monday to Saturday, 7.30am to 4.30pm)

If we're unable to answer your call, please leave a message on the answer machine with your name, hospital number and a brief reason for your call. We will return your call as soon as possible.

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