

HEALTHY START VITAMINS IN RICHMOND

The Healthy Start vitamins scheme provides free or low-cost vitamins to families in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Following an audit by the borough's public health team, the scheme is being re-launched with more locations and a cheaper price, with a view to encouraging more families to take up the vitamins.

The national Healthy Start scheme provides vouchers to families on means-tested benefits which can be redeemed for fruit, vegetables, milk and vitamins.



The vitamins are distributed at a number of health centres and children's centres throughout the borough, so it is easy to pick them up.

WHO CAN HAVE THE VITAMINS?

- There are vitamin tablets for pregnant and breastfeeding women containing folic acid and vitamins C and D.
- There are vitamin drops for babies and children under 5 containing vitamins A, C and D.
- Breastfed babies whose mothers took vitamins during pregnancy should start being given vitamins at 6 months old.
- Breastfed babies whose mothers did not take vitamins during pregnancy should start being given vitamins at 1 month old.
- Formula-fed babies should start being given vitamins once they are drinking less than 500ml of formula milk daily.
- Children should continue to have the vitamins until they are 5 years old.

WHY ARE THE VITAMINS BEING MADE AVAILABLE?

The Department of Health recommends that all pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under the age of 5 should take a vitamin supplement containing vitamin D. Healthy Start vitamins are designed to provide the right vitamins needed. Around a third of children are thought to be vitamin D deficient and this can result in soft bones and rickets, leaving a child vulnerable to physical injury and preventing bones from growing properly. Most of our vitamin D comes from sunlight and only small amounts from food, so a healthy diet alone cannot prevent deficiency.

Richmond currently has low levels of uptake of the vitamins so health professionals are encouraging people to take them. All mothers and children are at risk of vitamin D deficiency but some people may be at higher risk, for example people who spend less time outdoors in the sunlight, or people with darker skin, who need more time in the sun to get the same amount of vitamin D.

HOW MUCH DO THE VITAMINS COST?

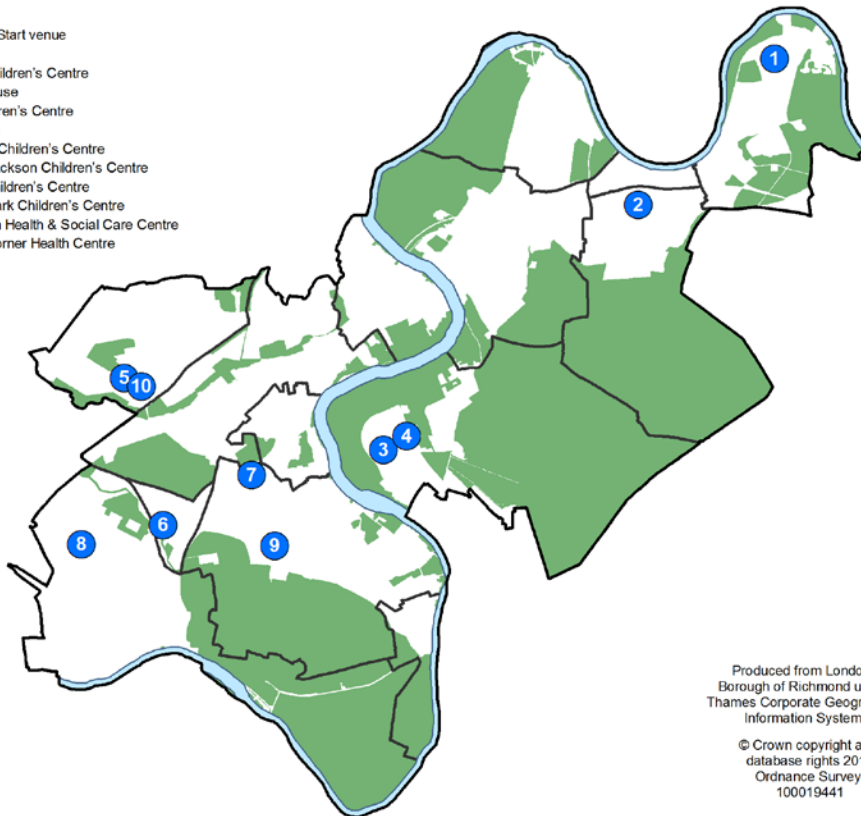
The vitamins are free for families with vouchers and the cost for everyone else has now been reduced to just £1 for the mothers' tablets and £1.50 for the children's drops.

HOW CAN PEOPLE GET THE VITAMINS?

The vitamins can now be picked up at a greater number of locations in the borough;

1. Barnes Children's Centre, SW13 9AE
2. Centre House, SW14 8LP
3. Ham Children's Centre, TW10 7BG
4. Ham Clinic, TW10
5. Heathfield Children's Centre, TW2 6EX
6. Norman Jackson Children's Centre, TW12 1QU
7. Stanley Children's Centre, TW11 8UH
8. Tangley Park Children's Centre, TW12 3XB
9. Teddington Health & Social Care Centre, TW11 0LR
10. Whitton Corner Health Centre, TW2 6LD

- Healthy Start venue
- 1 Barnes Children's Centre
 - 2 Centre House
 - 3 Ham Children's Centre
 - 4 Ham Clinic
 - 5 Heathfield Children's Centre
 - 6 Norman Jackson Children's Centre
 - 7 Stanley Children's Centre
 - 8 Tangley Park Children's Centre
 - 9 Teddington Health & Social Care Centre
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For further information see www.healthystart.nhs.uk