

This fact sheet explains the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force's (Task Force) draft recommendation statement on screening for vitamin D deficiency in adults. It also tells you how you can send comments about the draft recommendation to the Task Force. Comments may be submitted from September 22, 2020 to October 19, 2020. The Task Force welcomes your comments.

Screening for Vitamin D Deficiency in Adults

The Task Force issued a **draft recommendation statement** on *Screening for Vitamin D Deficiency in Adults*. The Task Force determined that there is not enough evidence to recommend for or against screening for vitamin D deficiency in adults without signs or symptoms.

This draft recommendation statement does not apply to pregnant people, those who live in nursing homes, or people who have health conditions where vitamin D supplementation is required.

What is vitamin D deficiency?

Vitamin D deficiency means that an individual's level of vitamin D in the blood is too low. Symptoms of severe vitamin D deficiency can include muscle weakness, bone pain, and fatigue.

Facts About Vitamin D and Vitamin D Deficiency

Vitamin D is a nutrient that helps the body absorb calcium and maintain strong bones. It may also have a role in other aspects of health. Vitamin D is naturally found in some foods, such as salmon, beef, liver, and egg yolks, and can be added to foods and drinks like cereal, milk, and orange juice. Supplements are another source of vitamin D. The body also makes vitamin D when the skin is exposed to the sun.

There are several factors associated with lower vitamin D levels, including:

- A diet lacking in vitamin D
- Little or no sun exposure
- Obesity
- Darker skin color

Ideal vitamin D levels vary from person to person, so there is no single level of vitamin D that is too low for everyone. People who are concerned about their vitamin D levels should talk to their clinicians about their individual health needs.

Facts About Screening for Vitamin D Deficiency

Screening for vitamin D is done through a blood test. Vitamin D levels in the blood can be difficult to measure accurately because of variations in testing methods. There is also potential that other compounds in the blood may affect blood test results. It is also not clear how much vitamin D in the blood is too low.

Potential Benefits and Harms

The Task Force found that there is not enough evidence to understand exactly what levels of vitamin D people need to keep them healthy, or what levels are too low. Once there is enough evidence to better understand this, then research on whether screening for vitamin D deficiency can help prevent negative health outcomes, such as falls, cancer, or heart problems, will be helpful.

Because not enough evidence is currently available, the Task Force could not determine the balance of benefits and harms for screening for vitamin D deficiency.

The Draft Recommendation on Screening for Vitamin D Deficiency in Adults: What Does It Mean?

Here is the Task Force's draft recommendation on screening for vitamin D deficiency in adults. It is based on the quality and strength of the evidence about the potential benefits and harms of screening for this purpose. It is also based on the size of the potential benefits and harms. Task Force recommendation grades are explained in the box at the end of this fact sheet.

When the Task Force issues an **I Statement**, it means the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of the service.

Before you send comments to the Task Force, you may want to read the full [draft recommendation statement](#). The recommendation statement explains the evidence the Task Force reviewed and how it decided on the grade. An [evidence document](#) provides more detail about the scientific studies the Task Force reviewed.

1 The USPSTF concludes that the current *evidence is insufficient* to assess the balance of benefits and harms of *screening for vitamin D deficiency in asymptomatic adults*. (**I Statement**)

Notes

1 *evidence is insufficient*
There is not enough information to make a recommendation.

screening for vitamin D deficiency
The way to assess someone's level of vitamin D. Screening for vitamin D is done through a blood test.

asymptomatic adults
People age 18 and older without signs or symptoms of vitamin D deficiency.


What is the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force?

The Task Force is an independent, non-federal, volunteer group of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine. The Task Force works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services, such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medicines. The recommendations apply to people with no signs or symptoms of the disease being discussed.

To develop a recommendation statement, Task Force members consider the best available science and research on a topic. For each topic, the Task Force posts draft documents for public comment, including a **draft recommendation statement**. All comments are reviewed and considered in developing the final recommendation statement. To learn more, visit the [Task Force website](#).

USPSTF Recommendation Grades	
Grade	Definition
A	Recommended.
B	Recommended.
C	Recommendation depends on the patient's situation.
D	Not recommended.
I statement	There is not enough evidence to make a recommendation.

Click Here to Learn More About Vitamin D Deficiency

-  **Vitamin D Deficiency**
(MedlinePlus)
-  **Vitamin D**
(MedlinePlus)
-  **Vitamin D: Fact Sheet for Consumers**
(National Institutes of Health)
-  **Vitamin D: Fact Sheet for Health Professionals**
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[Click Here](#) to Comment on the Draft Recommendation



The Task Force welcomes comments on this draft recommendation.



Comments must be received between September 22, 2020 and October 19, 2020.



All comments will be considered for use in writing final recommendations.