

The Department of Health recommends that all new babies are given a Vitamin K supplement at birth. The paediatricians at Bedford Hospital support this, and with the parents consent, all babies born here are given a supplement of Vitamin K.

Vitamin K

Vitamin K is a vitamin which occurs naturally in food. It helps to make the blood clot in order to prevent excess bleeding. Babies have a limited ability to make Vitamin K. In addition, during early infancy when fed entirely on milk, babies have a very small supply of Vitamin K, about 10% of the levels found in the mother. This means that a very small number of babies may suffer bleeding in the first few days, weeks or months of life due to a Vitamin K deficiency. This is called Haemorrhagic Disease of the Newborn (HDN).

HDN is usually prevented when a supplement of Vitamin K is given to babies soon after birth.

Haemorrhagic Disease of the Newborn (HDN)

This is a rare disorder that occurs in newborn babies leading to bleeding from the nose, mouth or into the brain. The blood loss is not always visible and in rare cases, this bleeding may lead to brain damage or even death.

HDN occurs in as many as one baby in every 10,000 full term babies (those born between 37 to 42 weeks gestation). It is not possible to identify which babies are at high or low risk, this is why Vitamin K supplements are recommended for all babies. Some babies are at greater risk of HDN such as babies who are premature, have a complicated delivery (e.g. by forceps), fall or find it hard to absorb feeds, or have liver disease that may show as prolonged jaundice.

How Vitamin K is given

The paediatricians at Bedford Hospital recommend that babies receive a single injectable dose of Vitamin K at or around the time of birth. This prevents HDN in virtually all babies. The injection is given once at birth and does not need repeating. We do not recommend the use of oral Vitamin K supplements as studies have shown that it is not as effective as it is not as well absorbed and requires repeated doses. However, if you would prefer your baby to receive Vitamin K supplements orally, we will facilitate this.

Consent

We will not give your baby the Vitamin K supplement without your consent.

If you decide that you don't want your baby to have the supplement, they will have an increased risk on HDN. Any bleeds or bruising, no matter how small, in the first six months of your baby's life must be looked at urgently. A member of staff will explain the warning signs of HDN and will offer further information and advice about the condition.

Consent Form

Consent to injectable vitamin K

I agree to the administration of Vitamin K by injection to my baby:

Full name:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Consent to oral vitamin K supplements

I would like my baby to receive oral Vitamin K. I understand that this form of administration may not be as effective as injectable Vitamin K and that repeat doses will be required for which I accept responsibility for administration.

Full name:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Refuse consent to administration of Vitamin K

I do not wish for my baby to have Vitamin K supplements. I understand that my baby has an increased risk of developing HDN and I have had the opportunity to discuss my decision with a doctor or a midwife.

Full name:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Record of the administration of IM Konakion MM Paediatric by a registered midwife under the standard operating procedure for midwives.

Please note that oral Vitamin K and Vitamin K for pre term and/or low birth weight babies must be prescribed by a medical practitioner using a prescription form.

Date	Time	Route	Given by	Print name
		Konakion 1mg		

Signed:.....

Name:.....

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Maternity Vitamin K



A guide for parents about vitamin K supplements for newborn babies.

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