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Call for evidence issued as 1 in 6 adults show low levels of vitamin D

A review has found that one in six adults and around 20% of children in the UK have a vitamin D deficiency making them more susceptible to rickets and bone pain.

The [call for evidence](#) will look to identify new ways of improving vitamin D intake across the UK through dietary supplements and fortified food and drink.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) launched the call to raise awareness of the importance of vitamin D and receive vital feedback from the public and health experts as well as food manufacturers.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said: “We must break the link between background and prospects for a healthy life, and I am determined to level up the health of the nation and tackle disparities.

“People from Black and Asian communities, older people and people who have limited access to the outdoors are more likely to have lower levels of vitamin D, which is essential for bone and muscle health and improving years of life lived in good health.

“I have launched this call for evidence to identify innovative ways we can encourage people to increase their vitamin D intake and help people live longer, healthier and happier lives.”

The public call for evidence comes ahead of the Health Disparities White Paper, which is due to be published later this year and will look to set out aims in reducing health disparities between communities and recognise the causes, so people’s backgrounds do not affect their prospects of a healthy life.

Currently I am advised that all adults and children try to maintain a daily intake of 10 micrograms of vitamin D with some at risk groups being told to take supplements.

The OHID are aiming to involve retailers, pharmacies and health organisations into the campaign to raise better national awareness.

Dr Tazeem Bhatia, Interim Chief Nutritionist at OHID, said: “I welcome this call for evidence as part of OHID’s continued drive to improve health outcomes and tackle health disparities. We want to improve the dietary health of the population and this includes supporting everyone to maintain sufficient vitamin D levels to support strong and healthy bones and muscles.”

Pregnant women and new mothers are eligible to receive free supplements which contain folic acid, vitamin C and vitamin D as part of the Healthy Start scheme. Children aged below four are also eligible for free supplements but take-up of this is currently very low.