Autumn 2023
Issue 2.3

# તમારો નિદાન

## Your Health

# Autumn Edition

Featuring New Authors!

**Herbal Medications..... p. 1-2**

**Seasonal Affective Disorder..... p. 3-4**

**Vitamin D – why you should know about it..... p. 5-6**

**Bronchiolitis..... p. 7-8**

**Vaccinations..... p. 9-10**

Welcome to our second seasonal issue including a collection of articles from our team as well as special contributions from guest doctors and a pharmacist based in the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust.

We hope you enjoy reading them!

If you would like to get involved or have any feedback, please email us at tamaritabiyat@gmail.com or message us on our socials @tamaritabiyat.

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**Your Health**

# Herbal Medications

by Maariya Din, MPharm

Herbal medications are comprised of active ingredients derived from plant extracts, such as leaves, roots, or flowers. These remedies have historically been used around the world for centuries for their perceived therapeutic properties and potential to address health concerns, from minor ailments to chronic conditions.

Examples of commonly used herbal medications with recognised benefits include:

- Peppermint oil
- Aloe vera
- Turmeric
- Ginger
- Ginkgo
- Ashwagandha
- St John's wort

Although herbal medications are often considered a more natural and holistic approach to healthcare, the same care should be taken when considering effects on the body as with conventional medications. Therefore, it is essential to consult with a healthcare professional regarding potential benefits and risks before taking herbal medications of any form.

Your Health

# Herbal Medications

by Maariya Din, MPharm

**What are the potential risks of herbal medications?**

• Not all herbal medications are regulated within the UK. This means there may be variations in product quality, potency, and safety.

• Some people may experience unpleasant side effects or reactions after taking herbal medications.

• There is limited evidence for the efficacy of herbal medications due to a lack of scientific research.

• Herbal medications can interact with other medications either bought over the counter or prescribed. This can lead to bad side effects or reduce the effectiveness of either treatment.

**How to safely use herbal medications**

• Look out for a traditional herbal registration (THR) marking on the packaging of the herbal medication. Although this does not mean it is suitable for everyone, the THR marking indicates the medicine complies with UK quality standards relating to safety and manufacturing.

• Speak to your doctor or pharmacist for advice before trying a herbal medicine. Especially if you have a serious health condition, about to have surgery or are elderly, pregnant or breastfeeding.

THR™

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Your Health

Written by Maariya Din

Tamari Tabiyat - Your Health

# Seasonal Affective Disorder

by Dr Jacqueline Moneke, MbChb BSc Hons

## What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) can be described as changes in mood that follow the pattern of the seasons – with a key symptom being low mood during winter and improved mood during the spring and summer seasons.

## What are the symptoms of SAD?

Symptoms can include: persistent low mood during the winter months; loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed; feelings of irritability, despair or hopelessness; lack of uninterrupted sleep and feeling more tired; difficulty concentrating and changes in appetite – either under-eating or over-eating.

## What causes SAD?

The exact causes of SAD are not fully understood and are thought to involve a range of factors, including reduced exposure to sunlight due to the shorter days during the autumn and winter periods.

It is thought that the lack of sunlight, contributes to a part of the brain called the hypothalamus, not functioning as well as it could.

Your Health

# Seasonal Affective Disorder

by Dr Jacqueline Moneke, MBChB BSc Hons

**Other factors that can contribute to SAD include:**

- Increased production of the hormone melatonin (a hormone which makes you feel sleepy), which is seen in SAD sufferer
- Lower production of the hormone serotonin (a hormone which affects our mood)
- A disruption in our body's internal clock, known as the circadian rhythm, which affects our ability to sleep and the quality of sleep

**Treatments for SAD**

A range of different therapies are available to treat SAD and this can be discussed with your GP, who can recommend the most suitable plan for you.

**These treatments can include:**

- Lifestyle changes, such as getting as much natural sunlight as you are able and engaging in exercise
- Talking therapy, such as counselling or cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Medication, such as anti-depressant therapy that can help to boost low mood

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Your Health

Tamari Tabiyat - Your Health

Written by Dr Jacqueline Moneke

# Vitamin D

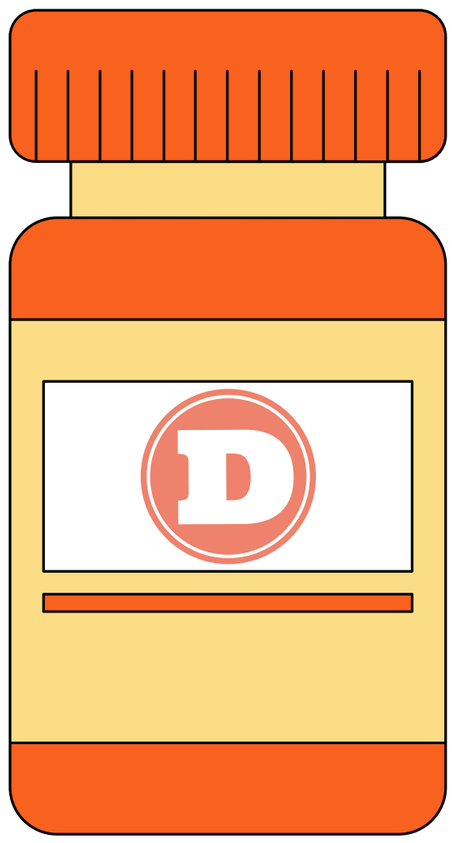
by Dr Henry Allberry, MBChb BSc Hons

## Why you should know about it

Vitamin D is a natural substance your body will produce in response to the sun. It is made by the skin when it comes into contact with direct sunlight.

Vitamin D helps your body process calcium and phosphate – these are both important to keeping your bones, muscles and teeth strong and healthy.

If you don't have enough vitamin D in your body you can get weak bones, more likely to get fractures and at higher risk of diseases like rickets (which can cause bone deformities in children).




Your body will produce more vitamin D, with the more exposure your skin gets to direct sunlight; but communities with darker skin tone, including South Asian and Afro-Caribbean ethnicities, need more vitamin D to keep healthy, and the UK government suggests taking medication to supplement vitamin levels, particularly during winter months, when the UK has less sun, and your body might not naturally make enough.

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# Vitamin D

by Dr Henry Allberry, MBChB BSc Hons

Other foods you can increase in your diet to help vitamin D include:

- Some fat spreads, eg margarine
- Some breakfast cereals

Vitamin D is particularly important for babies and young children. The government recommends that until their first birthday, babies should have a daily dose of 8.5-10 micrograms of vitamin D year round if they are:

- Breastfed
- Having less than 500ml (about a pint) of infant formula a day, as infant formula is already fortified with vitamin D

Children from 1-4 years old should be given a daily supplement containing 10 micrograms of vitamin D all through the year.

Vitamin D supplements can be easily bought at chemists or most supermarkets. Adults should take no more than 100 micrograms (4000 units) every day – you don't need more than this to keep your bones healthy.



Written by Dr Henry Allberry

# Bronchiolitis

by Dr Adam Gadhvi, MBBS

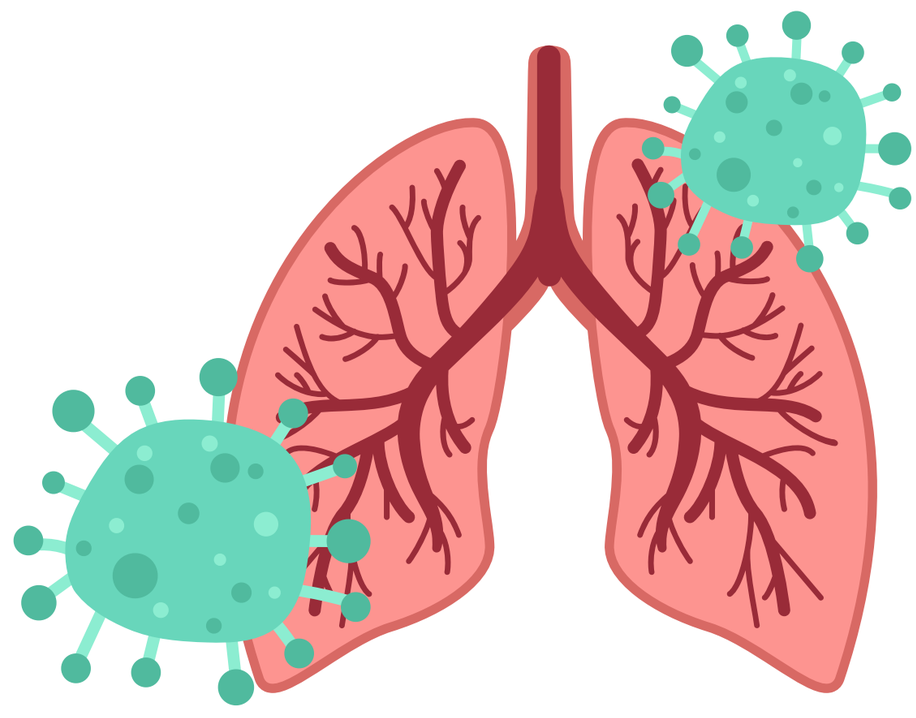
Bronchiolitis is a type of chest infection commonly found in children under 2 years, but more so in those aged 1-9 months.

It is typically caused by respiratory syncytial virus. An increase in rate of infections is seen usually in the winter months.

It spreads easily through coughs and sneezes.

**Children with increased risk of having bronchiolitis are:**

- Born prematurely
- Have a heart or lung condition
- Have a weakened immune system



**Symptoms to look out for:**

- Breathlessness
- Coryzal symptoms
- Dry cough
- Feeding difficulties associated with increasing shortness of breath
- Raised temperature
- Wheezing

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# Bronchiolitis

by Dr Adam Gadhvi, MBBS

Contact emergency services if you notice any of the following:

- Central cyanosis (appear blue on skin, tongue or lips)
- Consuming less than half of their usual fluid intake
- Appear dehydrated
- Difficulty breathing:
- Grunting, apnoea (pauses in breathing)
- Abdomen sucking under their ribs
- Chest recession (indrawing of part of chest)
- Respiratory rate of over 60 breaths/minute
- Your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake

Management

- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluid
- Give children's paracetamol (if over 2 months old) or ibuprofen (if over 3 months old)
- Keep your child upright when they're awake to enable easier breathing
- They may require hospital admission for supportive management


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Your Health

Tamari Tabiyat - Your Health

Written by Dr Adam Gadhvi

# Vaccinations

by Dr Sonam Gadhvi, BMBS BSc BMedSci

One of the major developments in medical science is the use of vaccinations. It has saved countless lives in preventing microorganisms causing harm to the body.

**How do they work?**

In simple terms, the way in which vaccines work is by introducing a weakened or dead version of the microorganism into the body to stimulate the production of antibodies to the microorganism. This is so that if, in the future, we were to encounter that particular microorganism, our body can quickly and efficiently produce large amounts of those specific antibodies which will eliminate it from the body and stop it multiplying and therefore causing disease.

It is important that those vaccines that are provided via the NHS, which have been proven to reduce death rates by those infections, have enough herd immunity for the general population. This means when there are enough people that have been vaccinated, so have immunity to the virus or bacteria so indirectly it protects those who haven't had it.

**NHS funded vaccinations:**

Childhood vaccinations are especially important due to their immune system not fully functioning yet. These include polio, diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps and rubella and whooping cough.

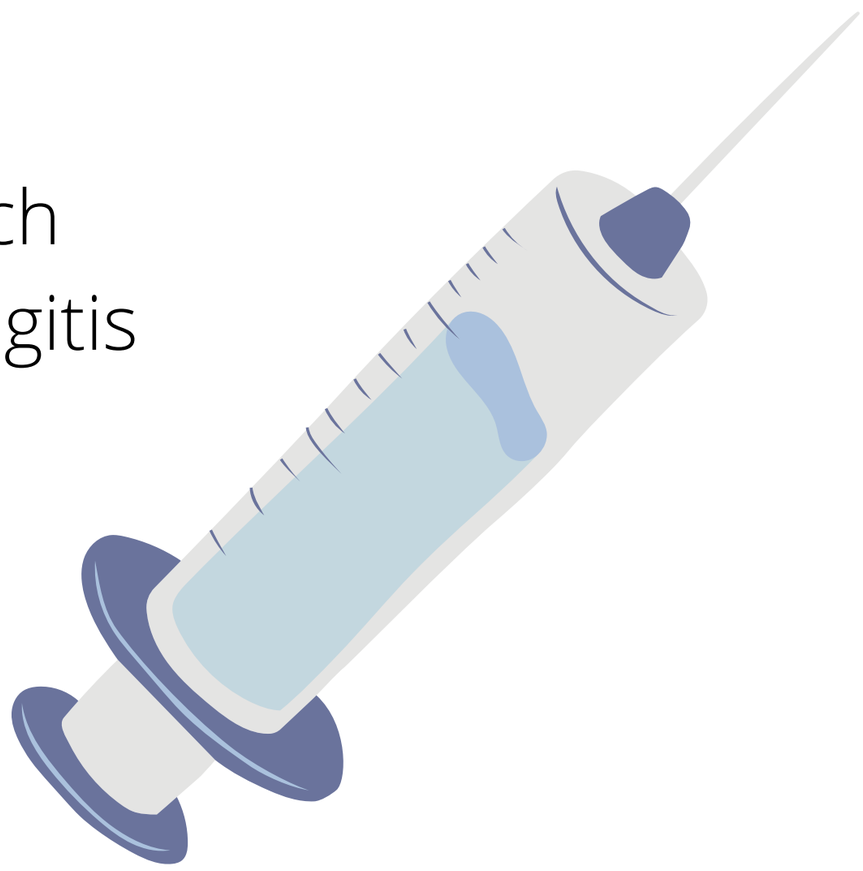
તમારી તબિયત
Your Health

# Vaccinations

by Dr Sonam Gadhvi, BMBS BsC BMedSci

The flu vaccine is available for people with chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart conditions and HIV/AIDS. The risk of infections are higher, therefore they are eligible for the annual flu vaccine. People over the age of 65 are also eligible due to weakening immune system as we get older.

The pneumococcal vaccine is a one off vaccine that is offered to adults over the age of 65 which helps prevent against infections such as meningitis and pneumonia.



The COVID vaccines are available to both at high risk and children ages 6 months to 4 years old which reduces the risks of catching COVID and becoming seriously ill.

These are some of the important vaccines that are available. If you believe you are eligible for these, contact your GP to find out more information.

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Your Health

Tamari Tabiyat - Your Health

Written by Dr Sonam Gadhvi

**We hope this has helped!**
**Tame 100 varus na sukhi thav - May you live happily to 100 years!**

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