Vitamin B12 Deficiency

Vitamin B12 deficiency is so widespread that many people think it's just part of growing up. Morning sickness, baby tantrums, teenage growing pains, heavy periods, getting old – could they be cured by a simple vitamin?

Vitamin B12 deficiency ("B12d") shows up in many different ways: neurological, haematological, endocrinological, immunological, and in connective tissue. It can be all at the same time, or just one symptom. It goes by many different names including autoimmune gastritis (Pernicious anaemia), Myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) and others.

Useful Hints and Tips …

It's useful to have a blood serum B12 test (although the best diagnosis for B12 deficiency is using signs and symptoms). But tablets or injections will upset the blood test, so if you can, **get a blood test** before you start supplementing with either B12 or folate.

Ask for these blood tests at the same time: **Folate** (Folic acid)**, Iron, Vit D, Vit B12;** they all work with vitamin B12 and you might need supplements for some of them if you are at the lower end of the range.

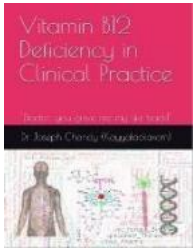
Ask for a print out of the blood tests, or view them yourself in the NHS or Patient Access app. It's always useful to have your own copies for future reference.

Your doctor will probably tell you that you don't have a deficiency if the blood serum B12 level is above 200ng/L. The new NICE guideline for B12 deficiency says that it's your symptoms that decide and they should consider treating even if your blood serum B12 is higher than this threshold, especially if there are any neurological symptoms.

The Parietal Cell or Intrinsic Factor antibody test is supposed to tell if you have Pernicious Anaemia (also called Autoimmune Gastritis). This test often gives false negatives (says you are fine when you aren't).

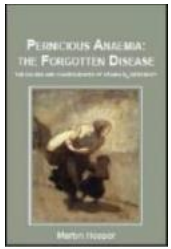
A B12 deficiency that goes undiagnosed or under-treated is serious and can even be deadly!

Good Resources



Vitamin B12 deficiency in clinical practice – a comprehensive guide at all stages of life.

By Dr Joseph Chandy and Hugo Minney. www.b12d.org/book



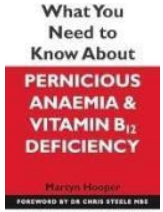
Pernicious Anaemia: The Forgotten Disease

by Martyn Hooper

B12d
VITAMIN B12 DEFICIENCY

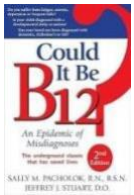
www.b12d.org

We have a great symptoms checker and FREE downloadable information for patients and health professionals alike. As well as many patient's experience stories and online events.



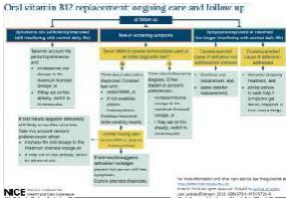
What You Need to Know About Pernicious Anaemia & Vitamin B12 Deficiency

by Martyn Hooper



Could It Be B12?: An Epidemic of Misdiagnoses

by Sally M. Pacholok RN (Author), Jeffrey J. Stuart DO (Author)



NG239 NICE Guideline Vitamin B12 deficiency in over 16s: diagnosis and management

https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng239

Did You Know?

- The craze of kids taking 'Laughing Gas/Balloons', (aka Nitrous Oxide/ Gas and Air which is also used for pain relief, Child birth etc) is disastrous. It stops B12 being absorbed, so if you're already low, it can exacerbate symptoms and cause depression and other neurological damage, as well as the many other symptoms of B12 deficiency.

- You **cannot** overdose on Vitamin B12 because it is a water-soluble vitamin.

- The treatment for B12 deficiency is for life and should never be stopped!

- **Low Levels of B12 can cause rapid brain shrinkage and dementia**.

- Most patients find that the 'one injection every 3 months' isn't enough for them to feel well. The NICE guideline indicates more frequent injections, and people sometimes find a high strength tablet, spray or patch can help in between injections.

- If you supplement with **methylcobalamin** *(one of the forms of B12)* you should also supplement with **adenosylcobalamin** as these do different jobs in the body. You should avoid cyanocobalamin – it works for some people but not everyone.

- Once supplementation has started, re-testing serum B12 isn't helpful as it simply shows how much B12 is floating around in your blood, and doesn't actually say how much is needed to carry out its job.

- B12 deficiency goes hand in hand with many other illnesses and is often misdiagnosed or overlooked. Until the B12 deficiency is correctly managed symptoms will develop or worsen, this is why it is **so** important in the first instance to rule this out or in.

  If the foundations aren't right the body can never heal!!

About B12d.org

We are a small charity set up by the late Dr Joseph Chandy in County Durham. The work is being continued by many dedicated volunteers and supported by his family members.

Dr Chandy was passionate about the subject and helped many sufferers. His book (see "good resources") continues to guide health professionals and sufferers alike. He was very keen to keep the support and help the charity provides, free of charge and available to all.

B12d.org Symptoms Checker