

Rickets

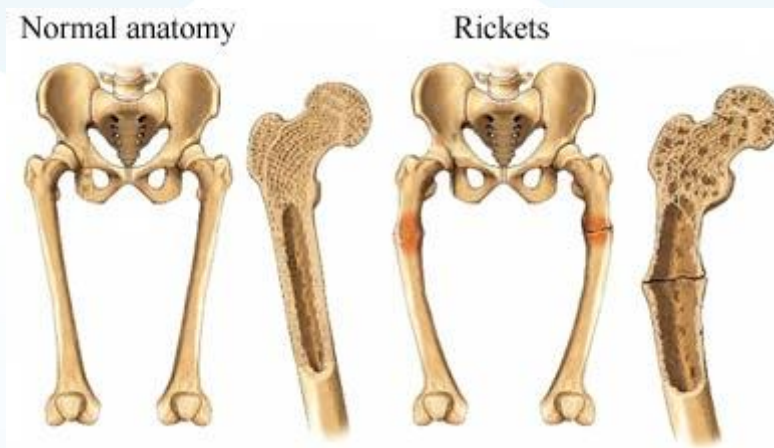
Rickets is the weakening and softening of bones in children. Normally, the condition occurs because of a prolonged and extreme deficiency in Vitamin D. Vitamin D works to promote the absorption of phosphorus and calcium from the gastrointestinal tract. When the body is deficient in this vitamin, it makes it hard for the bones to maintain proper phosphorus and calcium levels, which can cause rickets to occur.

If the deficiency causes rickets, adding in Vitamin D to the diet can often correct any bone issues for your child. If the condition is due to genetics, other medications might be needed to correct the problem. Some deformities caused by the condition will need to be corrected with surgery.

Rickets can occur in adults, but it is rare and most often involves children.

The Effects of Rickets

- Soft skull
- Soft bones
- Muscle weakness
- Skeletal deformities such as bowed legs, pelvic deformities and spinal deformities.
- Hypocalcemia (lack of calcium in the blood)
- Muscles spasms all over the body



How to Treat Rickets:

1. Proper Nutrition

The biggest issue is lack of food. Many foods contain calcium and vitamins but if children are not eating enough due to starvation or malnutrition then rickets can occur.

2. Supplements

Most of the time, treating the condition with calcium and Vitamin D supplements is the first line of defense. Dosage will vary from one child to the next, so make sure to follow the dosage provided. Too much of the vitamin can be dangerous.

3. Brace

In some cases of spinal deformities or bowlegs, you might need to use a special brace to properly position the child's body and allow the bones to grow correctly.

4. Surgery

In cases of severe deformities, the only option might be for the child to undergo surgery to help correct the deformity.

Tips:

- Children between three months and three years of age are most at risk of developing the condition because the quickness at which their skeletons are growing.
- Dark skin doesn't react in the same manner to sunlight and it tends to block UV rays compared to light-colored skin, so it won't produce as much Vitamin D.
- Children living in locations where there isn't as much sun are at an increased risk of developing the condition.
- If the child was born before their original due date, there is an increased chance that they will develop rickets.
- Some medical experts believe that babies who are exclusively fed breast milk may not get enough Vitamin D, so you may need to seek advice about Vitamin D supplementation with drops. Some people report that just a small amount of exposure to sunlight can be enough.
- Certain forms of anti-seizure medication have been shown to interfere with the body's natural ability to use Vitamin D.