

## Rickets

### Definition:

Rickets is a skeletal disorder that is caused by prolonged vitamin D deficiency that leads to the softening and weakening of bones as well as a deficiency of calcium and phosphate, which stimulates excess secretion of parathyroid hormones.

### Causes:

1. Rickets is caused by insufficient exposure to sunlight, and low intake of foods containing vitamin D.
2. Problems with vitamin D absorption due to certain medical conditions such as:  
Bowel resection, chronic pancreatitis , cystic fibrosis
3. Liver problems such as cirrhosis.
4. Kidney problems .
5. Medications such as phenytoin
6. Genetics.

### Symptoms: For children:

1. Delayed fontanel closure and softening of the skull bones.
2. Pain and swelling in the joints.
3. Rachitic rosary
4. Skeletal deformities in the legs and knees.
5. Delayed or unsteady walking.
6. Impaired growth, short stature, and lack of weight gain.
7. Dental deformities.
8. Bone fractures in certain cases.



### Risk factors:

1. Dark skin.
2. Children and older adults.
3. Pregnancy.
4. Obesity.
5. Exclusive breast-feeding after the age of 6 months.
6. Poverty.
7. Vegetarianism.
8. Alcohol consumption.
9. Living at high altitudes.
10. Family history.

### Diagnosis:

1. Consultation from a family doctor.
2. Medical history.
3. Physical examination.
4. A vitamin D test.

### Complications:

1. Chronic skeletal pain
2. Skeletal deformities
3. Skeletal fractures.

### Treatment:

Boosting vitamin D levels in the body.

### Prevention:

1. Proper nutrition and sufficient sun exposure.
2. Early diagnosis and treatment.



وزارة الصحة  
Ministry of Health

#### Frequently Asked Questions:

- **Is rickets a common disease?**  
Yes, it is a common disease.
- **What is to be expected after starting the treatment?**  
A positive outcome is expected if the patient responds to the treatment.
- **Should the mother refrain from breastfeeding?**  
No, mothers should continue to breastfeed.

#### Clinical Health Education Department

For more information, please contact us by email on:

[HPromotion@moh.gov.com](mailto:HPromotion@moh.gov.com)