

VITAMIN A DEFICIENCY



Vitamin A deficiency is the leading cause of preventable childhood blindness worldwide

THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

250 MILLION
pre-school children



are vitamin A-deficient



An estimated 250,000-500,000 vitamin A-deficient children go blind every year



Half of these children

DIE WITHIN A YEAR

of losing their sight

WHY DO YOU NEED VITAMIN A?



Your growth and development



Maintaining your immune system



Maintaining eye health and enabling your eyes to adapt to low light

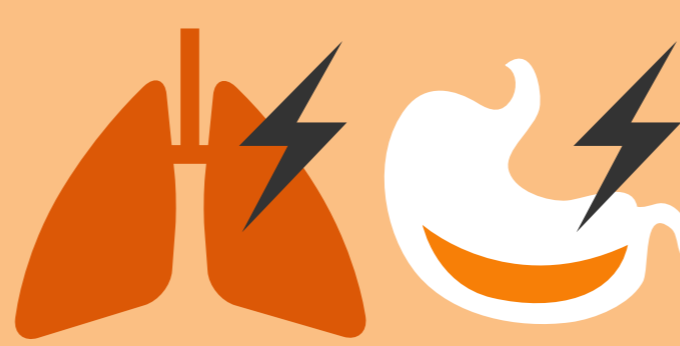
WHAT IF YOU DON'T GET ENOUGH?



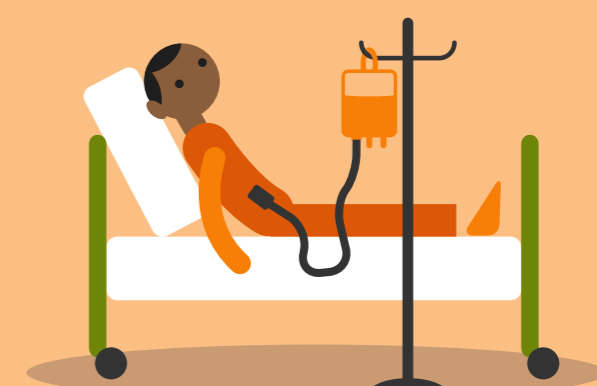
Early signs of vitamin A deficiency are impaired vision and night-blindness



Long-term deficiency can lead to scarring of your corneas and blindness



Your immune system is weakened and you're more prone to respiratory and digestive infections



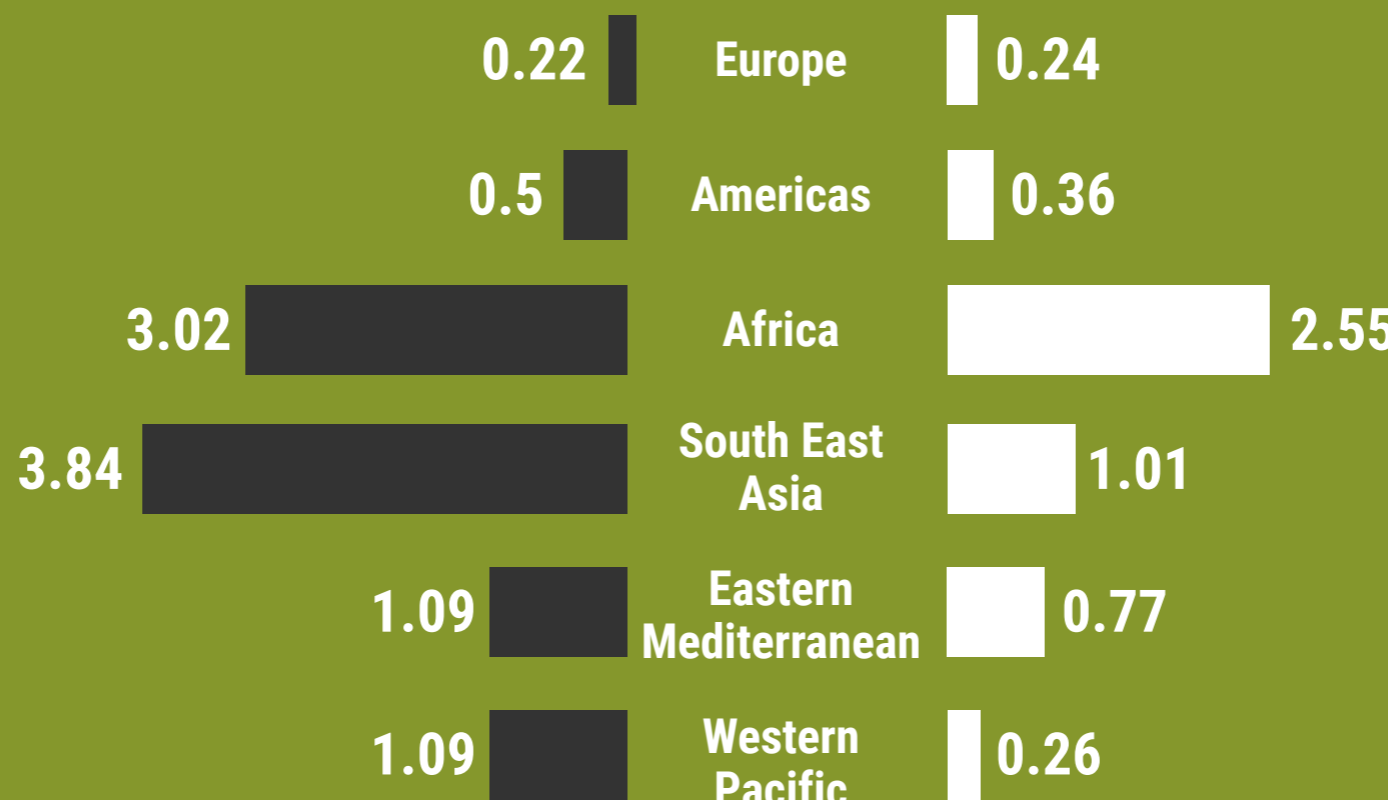
As a young child, your risk of severe illness, and even death, from common childhood infections such as measles increases

WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

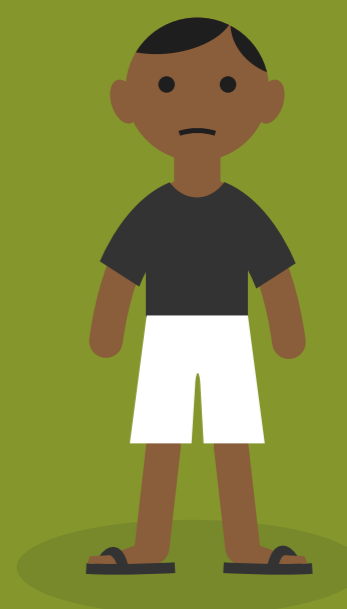
Pregnant women in low-income countries*



Number of pregnant women affected by night blindness (millions)



Children in low-income countries



* Particularly in the last trimester when their body and growing baby need the most vitamin A

HOW CAN WE PREVENT IT?

The World Health Organization aims to eliminate vitamin A deficiency. This can be done through a mixture of immediate interventions and long-term solutions:



Encouraging breastfeeding is the best way of protecting babies, as breast milk has high amounts of vitamin A



In the short term, treating deficient children with low-cost, high-dose supplements of vitamin A has reduced mortality by 23%



In the medium term, food fortification can help to prevent deficiency, while a balanced, nutrient rich diet can help to do so in the long term

WHAT IS NESTLÉ DOING?

We've committed to providing

200
billion servings

of micronutrient fortified foods and beverages annually worldwide by 2016.



We target products for fortification that are consumed widely and regularly (such as milks and condiments) that contribute to a generally healthy diet, and that are affordable and likely to be bought by the population at risk.

In 2014

81%

of sales of our popularly positioned products (high-quality, nutritious foods and beverages at a price lower-income consumers can afford) were fortified with at least one of the 'big four' micronutrients: iron, iodine, vitamin A and zinc.

Sources

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