

# Thiamine Deficiency (Vitamin B1)

# Thiamine Deficiency (Vitamin B1) Patient Information

---

## Hepatology Service

The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link: <https://www.wvl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets> or scan the QR code.

**Author ID:** JW

**Leaflet Ref:** SN 007

**Version:** 3

**Leaflet title:** Thiamine Deficiency (Vitamin B1)

**Date Produced:** January 2023

**Expiry Date:** January 2025

## Introduction

Thiamine Hydrochloride tablets are vitamin tablets (Vitamin B1); you will have been given these because your body does not have enough Thiamine (Vitamin B1).

## What is Thiamine Hydrochloride and why do I need it?

Thiamine hydrochloride is a synthetic version of natural Thiamine (vitamin B1); this will help to increase the Thiamine levels in your body that your diet alone cannot provide. Your body does not produce Thiamine naturally, so a varied diet is essential. Thiamine (Vitamin B1) is an important nutrient for taking energy from food and turning it into energy for your brain, nerves, and heart. When your Thiamine levels are low, this can lead to deficiency and can cause ongoing and lasting health issues.

## What happens if my Thiamine levels are low?

Your body stores very little Thiamine, so Thiamine deficiency can happen very quickly, especially if you are not eating very much. Certain conditions can cause lack of Thiamine re-absorption, i.e., Alcohol Excess, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, Bariatric surgery, anorexia nervosa, Hyperemesis Gravidarum (pregnancy-related sickness), ongoing nausea/vomiting, and advanced age. Sometimes your diet alone cannot provide your body with enough, and Thiamine tablets will be recommended by your healthcare provider.

## What happens if I don't have enough Thiamine?

As mentioned, your body stores very little Thiamine; if you are not eating much or if you are vomiting for any reason, this can deplete your levels further. Not having enough Thiamine from your diet alone can cause serious health complications.

## What are the symptoms of Thiamine Deficiency?

- Blurred or double vision
- Facial weakness
- Memory loss
- Rapid heartbeat
- Dizziness
- Leg swelling
- Numbness to face, hands, and feet
- Loss of balance
- Loss of muscle power
- Struggling to urinate

If Thiamine deficiency is severe, serious health problems can occur. Always consult your healthcare provider.

## Where can I get Natural Thiamine?

Thiamine can be found in Thiamine-enriched foods, eating a varied diet including poultry, meat, fish, cereals, beans, fresh vegetables, and some dairy. Some foods can inhibit Thiamine absorption also; these include coffee, chocolate, black tea, and alcohol.

## What will be the benefits of taking Thiamine?

Taking Thiamine will help to prevent complications of the nervous system, heart, and brain. Vitamin B1, or Thiamine, enables the body to use carbohydrates and turn them into energy, which is essential for body function. If your healthcare adviser thinks you are at risk of developing Thiamine deficiency, you should be offered Thiamine. Fortunately, Thiamine Deficiency is usually easy to reverse with supplementation.

## Follow up

Your GP will be able to manage this medication for you, and it is important you continue to take it as prescribed.

## Dosing

Thiamine 50mg Tablets, 4 times a day, 7 days a week.

## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on-the-spot advice, information, and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

## Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager  
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary  
Wigan Lane  
Wigan WN1 2NN

## Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?

2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see the patient information leaflet, Ref. Corp 006 How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover. This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

© Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. All rights reserved. Not to be reproduced in whole or in part without the permission of the copyright owner.

Call 111 first when it's less urgent than 999.

Phone: 0808 802 1212

Text: 81212

[www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk)



Version number: **1.0**  
Last modified date: **24th March 2026**

All rights reserved © 2026  
WWL Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust