

HFMA - The Voice of the Natural Health Industry. For information on HFMA membership, or enquiries, call 0208 481 7100 or email office@hfma.co.uk

hfma Bulletin Board

— News, information and comment



GETTING THE BEST FROM THE HFMA...

Media relationships

With natural health receiving greater coverage than ever across the pages of the national media, it has never been more important to maintain positive relationships between health journalists and the industry. As the voice of the industry since 1965, the HFMA keeps key health journalists informed with regular communication. Key face-to-face meetings with influential health and consumer journalists also means the HFMA can communicate news stories and research to outline what's currently on the agenda and more importantly, what's on the horizon. For further information visit www.hfma.co.uk.

When it comes to nutrition, it's not all child's play

Now Prince George has arrived, it seems a fitting time for retailers and manufacturers to think about the vital role they can play in ensuring optimum nutrition for babies. Achieving the right nutritional support is essential, but how much do UK parents know about the vitamin and mineral needs of their brand new baby?

The great news is this is one of the areas where the Department of Health is firmly on side, recommending all children from six months to five years are given vitamins A, C and D (unless receiving more than 500ml of infant formula a day). This was further reinforced last year when the Chief Medical Officers wrote to health professionals recommending vitamin D supplements for all infants aged six months to five years, containing 7 to 8.5 grammes of vitamin D.

National diet and nutrition surveys show that toddlers are achieving just 27 per cent of the recommended levels of vitamin D from food. At the same time, new research points to its importance, most recently in the areas of asthma and multiple sclerosis. The shortfall in vitamin D in children is a huge public health issue and the impact is already becoming apparent as, according to the Royal College of



Robert Taylor

Vice president of Vitabiotics and vice chair of the HFMA

Paediatrics, the age old problem of rickets has now resurfaced.

In February the Department of Health also launched its new voluntary statements for vitamin D products and retailers can help convey these clear informative messages through in store activity such as baby themed windows, banner displays and back boards. Meanwhile, behind the scenes your trade association, HFMA, continues to support many key areas, from working with DH on recommended

wording for labelling messages to convey the importance of vitamin D, to seeking an acceptable outcome to the problem of gaps in Food Additive legislation for infants under 36 months. Also, the HFMA will be holding a forthcoming Parliamentary reception on vitamin D and working with key bodies reviewing the evidence on vitamin D to help shape future policy and guidance.

New research by Vitabiotics found that as many as 87 per cent of parents were not aware which vitamins their child should be supplemented with. Over half had no idea there was any vitamin recommendations for children at all! With the Royal baby, the sunshine vitamin is an important message we should all be shouting about.

THE KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The Department of Health recommends all children from six months to five years are given vitamins A, C and D (unless receiving more than 500ml of infant formula a day).
- National Diet and Nutrition Surveys show toddlers are achieving just 27 per cent of the recommended levels of vitamin D from food.
- The HFMA's forthcoming Parliamentary reception on vitamin D will cover working with key advisory bodies reviewing the evidence on vitamin D to help shape future policy and guidance.

NEWS...

You and Yours

The HFMA recently had a great opportunity to represent the industry on an episode of BBC Radio 4's popular *You & Yours* programme. This episode focused on the role of supplementation, and looking at what, if any, risks are associated with high levels of vitamin and mineral supplements. An early alert from the producers of the show meant Pegasus were able to secure the HFMA's participation in the discussion from Martin Last.

The other speaker was Dr Alan Stewart, who argued vulnerable groups, ie the elderly, should be provided with more information about over-consumption of key nutrients, but noted the HFMA is to be "congratulated" for its efforts to work with authorities.

HFMA SPOTLIGHT



Jeremy Stephens
Health Designs,
Bestcare Products Ltd

What do you most enjoy about your job?

As a consultant specialising in new product development, I have over the last 30 years worked on, and helped create, over 2000 different vitamin, mineral and herbal health products. It is such fun to create products and ranges that clients want, help them imbue their products with positivity, and then see them sell to customers all over the

world. Helping others spread the good word on natural health products definitely gives one a very good feeling of achievement.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Keeping up to date on daily emails! Working with very different and interesting clients – some of whom have 100 plus staff, others just working on their own, each are just as important.

Where do you see your business in 10 years' time?

I hope to work on many new formulations and help plenty more compa-

nies achieve success. Yes, the current legislative challenges are considerable, but with determination and innovation the industry will definitely continue to expand and I will be here to help ensure that happens.

What's the best piece of business advice you've ever been given?

There is always a solution...one just has to find it! Plus, as I sit here writing this while on a long weekend break in a very sunny Italy, stress is not necessary or healthy and all things can wait until 'tomorrow'!

What do you find most useful about

being a member of the HFMA?

The HFMA is a superb source of up to date information. The modern world consumes information and I often need the latest legal or technical information. The HFMA provides this – and very quickly.

If you could change one thing in the world what would it be?

Injustice and the way vested interests and 'Big Business' can influence people's companies and lives.

Who is your biggest inspiration?

Winston Churchill – he was just so determined.