

Vitamin Supplement

Just incubating your first eggs? If your incubation has been correct and the breeder diet good, you will have a nice batch of chicks hatch out.

So what now?

One of the old stories about chicks is that they can survive from the yolk for 3 days so don't feed them to use up the yolk. This is supposed to prevent yolk sac infection, which actually is a result of poor incubation plus poor sanitation.

It has been well known for some years that the length of the gut at the end of the first week determines the digestive capacity of the bird for life. If we starve the chick for 3 days, then start feeding the chick, it takes another 2 days for the gut to properly start digesting the food. Then the gut can start to grow.

On the other hand, if we start the digestion on day one it has a full 7 days to grow, and the chicks will be much healthier throughout their life.

It has been an industry practice to give the chicks a dose of vitamins with a sugar carrier at day one to assist in the start-up of the gut. This has been very successful at assisting the successful starting of the chicks. In recent research, it was found that adding some body salts to the mix improved the start even more. So vitamin mixes like [Bellbreeder](#) are even better for young chicks.

Often people worry about too much vitamins and minerals. It is very hard to overdose, so don't worry if the mix is a little strong. I like to use a double strength dose on day 1 and then a standard dose up to 5 days, as stress support anytime there is unusual circumstances, at 5-6 weeks of age when coccidiostat challenge is likely, and then anytime I think they need it.

One of the beauties of [Bellbreeder](#) is the broad spectrum of ingredients, another is the super high solubility, and another is the application to all ages of birds. The super solubility of this mix means it is ideal for making liquid solution.

A 1 litre coke bottle, properly washed, and 1 litre of boiled water, cooled after boiling. Add 1/2 litre to the bottle, pour in 1 sachet of Bellbreeder, and top up with boiled water until full. A quick shake and it will completely dissolve.

Use at the rate of 1 ml per litre of drinking water for general use, 2 ml for day old chicks.

The birds do not care if the dose is variable, so it's easy to add to a cup or bell drinker, just add the amount of vitamins to the drinker that the birds would drink in a day.

For example, 4 standard layers will drink about 1 litre in a day, so make sure the drinker cup is close to full of water, and then add 1 ml to the drinker. It's just like a vitamin pill but in the water.

You can keep the bottle in the fridge, properly labelled (it's not harmful to humans but might not be to our taste) for 1 week without loss of quality.

Bellsouth for [Poultry Vitamins](#)