

PARTNER CASE STUDY

# Bone health campaign goes underground

Osteocare and the Royal Osteoporosis Society join forces to alert London Underground commuters about a risk to their bones during the winter months

## The challenge

When a study of 2,000 people commissioned by the Royal Osteoporosis Society revealed the extent to which people were putting their bones at risk during the winter months, the charity knew what it had to focus its winter awareness campaign on.

“We discovered that although nearly two in five people (38%) were aware their calcium intake impacts on bone health, just 7% were aware of the importance of getting enough vitamin D to enable their bodies to absorb and use calcium to give their bones strength and hardness,” says Claire Bovey, campaigns manager for the Royal Osteoporosis Society.

She adds, “Even more worryingly, although 75% of people were aware that sunlight is a good source of vitamin D, very few people knew that, in the UK, we can only get vitamin D from the sun between April and September. All of which made it a key priority for us to warn people about the need to protect their bones from vitamin D deficiency during the winter months.”

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## The approach

The clocks going back in October was set to reduce the amount of daylight even more, providing the ideal opportunity for the Royal Osteoporosis Society to launch a campaign to alert people about the need to protect their bones during the winter months.

When it heard about the campaign, Vitabiotics, a long-term partner of the charity was keen to support the campaign. “With the clocks going back signaling shorter days and less sunlight, the possibility of vitamin D deficiency is very real,” says Ellora Booley, brand manager at Vitabiotics.

“Vitamin D is a vital component of the Osteocare formulation, as it contributes to normal absorption and utilisation of calcium in the body and helps to maintain normal bones,” adds Ellora. “We were keen to raise awareness about the importance of getting enough vitamin D in winter as well, so decided to gift the charity some budget we had set aside for a London Underground advertising campaign, for it to use for its winter public awareness campaign.”

## The solution

Thanks to Osteocare, the Royal Osteoporosis Society had access to more than a thousand London Underground panels, on 543 trains across the entire London Underground network, for the entire month of October. Although the audiences would have time to dwell on the message, there was limited space on the panels, meaning the message had to be short and impactful.

“As part of our research into attitudes towards vitamin D, we tested various messages to encourage people to see that vitamin D intake was relevant to them,” says Claire. “This showed that highlighting the importance of bones, and the need to take care of them, were the strongest messages. Whereas messaging around keeping bones strong, and preventing osteoporosis, were the weakest. In response, we made our strapline: Now is the time your bones need you most.”

Osteocare further supported the campaign with high profile newspaper adverts on 26 October, the night the clocks went back, in The Times, The Sunday Times, Daily Telegraph and i newspaper. “The advertisements served as a handy reminder to put your clocks back and consider your bone health at the same time,” says Ellora. “Collectively they were circulated to around 1,727,555 adults. While a supporting social media campaign on our Twitter and Facebook feeds, reached 500,000 followers.”

## The results

The Clocks Back tube campaign was seen by two million people a day for over a month. A unique url [theros.org.uk/clocksback](https://theros.org.uk/clocksback) placed on the ads linked people back to the charity's vitamin D web page. This gave more information on foods that are naturally rich in vitamin D, such as oily fish and eggs, and who should consider take a vitamin D supplement, especially in winter.

“78% of the visitors who visited our website due to the underground adverts were new, demonstrating the extent to which this helped us to reach a new audience,” says Claire. “The partnership with Osteocare was very beneficial, enabling us to combine our understanding of bone health with their consumer advertising expertise.”

Ellora says, “Working with the Royal Osteoporosis Society team on this campaign has been a fantastic experience. Truly collaborative. We are extremely proud of this campaign and our partnership with the charity, which continues to provide enhanced credibility for Osteocare within the bone health sector. We're pleased it encouraged customers to reach out and engage with experts in this field, for advice or support, which in turn reinforces Osteocare's brand values.”

## Partner with the Royal Osteoporosis Society

If you would like to join our mission to make everybody care about their bones, contact Henry Mace, Head of Partnerships, about opportunities to partner with us.

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