# Avitaminosis in the Ghetto

**Categories:** **Phenomena**

Quantity deficiencies in the nutrition of the ghetto population are accompanied by deficiencies in quality, including insufficient amounts of vitamins, causing widespread vitamin deficiency (Avitaminosis). In 1940, the most common ailment was scurvy[1] (having caused several deaths), surpassed in the summer of 1941 by pellagra ([vide]). In the winter of 1942/43, a common condition to emerge was osteomalacia[2] (vide Vigantol) accompanied by tetany[3]; at that point rickets was a very rare disease in the ghetto. The type of vitamin deficiency most frequently found in children was xerophthalmia[4]. Numerous cases of miscarriage, bleeding, liver and renal disease (kidney stones), and ulcers can most likely be attributed, at least in part, to the lack of appropriate vitamins. In the summer of 1942, fifty-five deaths due to vitamin deficiency were recorded.

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## Footnotes

1 Scurvy – a condition affecting multiple organs caused by vitamin C deficiency.
2 Osteomalacia - softening of the bones. Occurs in people who suffer from vitamin D3 deficiency.
3 Tetany – excessive muscle contraction. Occurs when there is a deficiency of calcium in blood.
4 Xerophtalmia – drying of the cornea and conjunctiva or of the entire eye, which can lead to blindness. Sometimes caused by vitamin A deficiency and emaciation.

## Resources

Encyclopedia, p.9.

## Tags

provisions starvation sanitary conditions everyday life

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