



# Iron Deficiency Anemia

Red blood cells carry oxygen in the body so that all organs can function properly. Anemia means that the number of red blood cells in your child's body is below normal. Symptoms of anemia can be fatigue, poor growth, poor learning, or no symptoms at all.

Iron is needed to make these red blood cells. All infants are relatively deficient in iron; that is why most baby foods are supplemented with iron and breast milk has a special kind of well-absorbed iron. Despite all of this extra iron, some infants need even more.

## Treatment

### Offer your child a variety of foods rich in iron

- a. Meats, fish, and poultry
- b. Sweet potatoes, most beans, peas, enriched cereals and breads.
- c. Spinach and egg yolk contain iron, but it is a form that is not well absorbed by the body.
- d. If your child is already onto whole milk, it is important that they do not drink more than 24 oz a day so that they have an adequate appetite for iron-containing foods. Milk (that is not formula) does not contain iron.

### Iron supplements can be purchased at the pharmacy or in our office

- a. If hemoglobin is between 10 -11 ng/dL then we recommend Poly-vi-sol with iron 1 ml orally once a day.
- b. If hemoglobin is between 9-10 ng/dL, we recommend either Fer-in-sol 1 ml orally twice a day or MyKidzIron 1.5 ml orally twice a day.
- c. Sometimes, the iron can upset your child's stomach and should be taken with food. It is a good idea to mix the iron with juice containing vitamin C (like orange juice). This will make it easier for your child to take and will help the body absorb the iron.
- d. Iron can stain the teeth so it is important to offer juice, water or brush the teeth after giving the iron. If the teeth get stained, brush teeth with baking soda.
- e. Expect your child's stools to become greenish black during the treatment.

**Make an appointment in 1 month to recheck.** If the counts improve then we will continue the medicine for another two months to replenish your child's iron stores.

### When to call our office:

1. Your child refuses to take the iron
2. Your child's stools become hard and difficult to pass (constipation)
3. Other questions and concern

*Keep all medicines out of the reach of children*