

ANEMIA, IRON DEFICIENCY

DEFINITION

- Anemia means that the number of red blood cells in your child's body is below normal. The red blood cells carry oxygen in the bloodstream, and iron is needed for the body to produce red blood cells.
- Iron deficiency anemia is caused by too little iron in the diet.
- This diagnosis must be confirmed by a physician.

HOME TREATMENT

Iron Medicines

The iron medicine for your child is _____.

Your child's dose is _____ mL given _____ times each day for _____ weeks.

This medicine contains iron and will need to be taken for 2 to 3 months to get your child's red blood cells back to a normal level. It can occasionally cause an upset stomach and should be taken with food to prevent this. Mix the iron medicine with a juice containing vitamin C (orange juice, for example). This will improve iron absorption and prevent staining of the teeth. (*Note:* If the teeth become stained, the stain can be brushed off with baking soda. The iron may change the color of bowel movements to greenish black, but this is harmless. Too much iron can be

dangerous and cause a serious poisoning. Treat iron like any medicine: Keep it out of your child's reach.

Diet. If your child's diet is well balanced, she won't get anemia again. The following foods contain iron:

- Meats, fish, and poultry have the most iron.
- Raisins, dried fruits, sweet potatoes, lima beans, kidney beans, chili beans, pinto beans, green peas, peanut butter, enriched cereals, and breads are other iron-rich foods. Spinach and egg yolks also contain iron, but it is in a form that is not readily available to the body.

Your child should not drink more than 24 ounces of milk each day (about three glasses) so that she has an adequate appetite for iron-containing foods. Milk doesn't contain any iron.

Follow-up Visits. We would like to see your child in 1 week and again in 2 months to be sure the level of red cells in the blood has returned to normal.



CALL OUR OFFICE

During regular hours if

- Your child refuses the iron medicine.
- You have other concerns or questions.