



ANDORRA PEDIATRICS

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Iron Deficiency Anemia

Anemia means that the number of red blood cells in your child's body is below normal. Anemia is diagnosed when your child's hemoglobin count (part of the complete blood count) is low. The red blood cells carry oxygen in the bloodstream, and iron is needed for your child's body to make red blood cells. A child getting too little iron from his or her diet causes iron deficiency anemia resulting in decreased growth and fatigue.

Iron medicines

Iron is available in different concentrations (Feosol is one common brand name)

- **Drops:** 15 mg of elemental iron per 1.0 cc (comes in dropper bottle)
- **Liquid:** 44 mg of elemental iron per teaspoon (5 cc or ml)
- **Pills:** 60-65 mg of elemental iron per pill

Dose: Dose is based on body weight. Ask your Pharmacist for one of the above iron formulations and let them know how many “**Milligrams of Elemental Iron**” are needed. The dose can be given at one time or divided up 2-3 times/day. **Elemental iron is the actual iron content of the medicine.**

Infants: ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 droppers (1.0 cc) per day

Children: _____ teaspoon (s) per day

Adolescents: 60 mg (Elemental) 2X per day (A 325 mg iron tab has only 60 mg of elemental iron)

- This medicine contains iron and will need to be taken until your child's red blood cells return to a normal level (3-6 months).
- 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 cleaned off with baking soda).
- The iron may change the color of bowel movements to greenish black, but this is harmless.

- Treat iron like any medicine. Too much iron can be dangerous. **Keep it out of your child's reach.**

Iron-Rich Diet

If your child's diet is well balanced, he or she will not get anemia again. The following foods contain iron:

- Meats, fish, and poultry have the most iron.
- Breads, chili beans, dried fruits, enriched cereals, green peas, kidney beans, lima beans, peanut butter, pinto beans, raisins, and sweet potatoes 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 a day (about 3-4 glasses). Milk does not contain any iron. Too much milk will decrease their appetite for iron rich foods.

Follow-Up Visits

Your child needs to have a repeat blood count done in 4-8 weeks to be sure the level of red blood cells in the blood has returned to normal. The extra iron supplement should be continued until your child's blood count has returned to normal. After this, your child should be placed on a multivitamin with iron (12-15 mg or elemental iron per vitamin).

This information should not be used as substitute for the medical care and advice of your child's physician. Health related topics found on the Andorra Pediatrics web site should not be used for diagnosing purposes or be substituted for medical advice. As with any new or ongoing treatment, always consult your professional healthcare provider before making any changes in treatment or beginning any new treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office.