

Practice Point

Iron requirements in the first 2 years of life

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Iron is an essential micronutrient required for hemoglobin synthesis, central nervous system development, and protection from infection. Early childhood is a time of vulnerability as iron deficiency in this period is associated with impaired neurodevelopment. Low socioeconomic status, preterm birth, and suboptimal diet are risk factors for iron deficiency. Due to a lack of iron excretory mechanism, the possibility of iron excess also exists. Appropriate iron intake in the first 2 years of life is critical.

Keywords: Anemia; Complementary feeding; Infant nutrition; Iron deficiency; Iron requirements

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