Iron improves life

Worldwide, anemia affects:
- 48% of children under 2 years
- 53% of school-age children
- 42% of women
- 51% of pregnant women
- 25% of men

The World Health Organization named iron deficiency one of the top 10 preventable risks for disease, disability, and death in the world today.

4.5 billion people or 3 out of every 4 people are affected by iron deficiency and anemia. These are critical public health problems that affect every nationality and economic group.

Iron deficiency and anemia impair social and intellectual development, growth, physical ability, productivity, and immune response to illness. Iron deficient pregnant women and infants face an increased risk of death.

These consequences of iron deficiency and anemia help fuel the cycle of poverty by preventing improvements in national health, education, and economic efforts.

Improve Women’s Health and Birth Outcomes
Every day 301 maternal deaths and 1,624 perinatal deaths occur as a result of iron deficiency. Repeated pregnancies and normal monthly blood loss put all healthy women at high risk of iron deficiency. A pregnant woman requires extra iron, to meet her body’s increased needs and those of her baby. Preventing and treating iron deficiency in women will help prevent both maternal and perinatal mortality, improve women’s health, and give infants a healthy start to life.

Build a Strong Nation
Prevention and treatment of iron deficiency and anemia can raise national productivity by 20%. As well, individual wage earning ability can increase. Reducing iron deficiency brings a better quality of life to individuals and communities, and helps break the cycle of poverty.

Help Children Grow Stronger and Smarter
Adequate iron nutrition is necessary for the brain to develop and function, motor skills and coordination to increase, and resistance to disease and illness to build up. Preventing and treating iron deficiency in children has long-term benefits of improved child development, increased success of education and social programs, and better quality of life.

take action now!
1. Support efforts to fortify foods (flour, soy sauce, infant foods).
2. Provide iron supplements to women and children during critical stages of growth and preparation for pregnancy.
3. Increase consumption of iron-rich foods through dietary education.
4. Strengthen public health measures (such as deworming and prevention of malaria).

Information sources:
U.S. Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance, 1997 (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
World Development Indicators data from the World Bank 1995 - 1999

Data for children: Information sources:

For further information please contact: The Micronutrient Initiative P.O. Box 10875, 230 Albion Street MS 4101, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-10875, U.S.A. Tel: 734.765.4805, Email: micronutrients@umich.edu

©CARE/KATYA ANDRESEN
DESIGNED BY GRUNDY AND NORTHEDGE DESIGNERS