

Anaemia in the Young Child

Anaemia is important to diagnose because it commonly comes along with malnutrition. It may be a cause of poor appetite. Blood testing is essential, but even in its absence based on observation of pallor alone, treatment can be started.

Looking for Anaemia in Children

Unusual paleness (Pallor) of the skin of the soles or palms is a sign of anaemia.

- To see if the child has anaemia, look at the skin of the child's palm. Hold the child's palm open by grasping it gently from side to side.
- Do not stretch the fingers backward. This may cause pallor.
- Compare the child's palm with your own palm and the palm of other children. If the skin is paler than of others, the child has pallor.

Treatment for anaemia is to give one tablet of paediatric iron daily. And also give one tablet of Albendazole for deworming once in six months. For a child less than two years, give half a tablet of Albendazole (Refer Annexure 6). Iron rich foods as discussed for the mother (Book 6) are also needed for the young child. If anaemia does not improve, the child must be referred to a doctor for more complete blood tests and treatment.

