



ABSTRACT

The importance of iron intake for children's growth and development

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Indonesian basic health research or *Riset kesehatan dasar* (Riskesdas) 2013 showed that anemia prevalence among school-aged children (5-14 years old) is 26.4%. The prevalence increased from data recorded in Riskesdas 2007, which was 9.4%. Meanwhile the prevalence of iron deficiency among school-aged children was reported 47.2%.

Iron deficiency occurs when iron intake does not meet the requirement. This could be due to suboptimum iron intake or absorption, parasitic worm or chronic bleeding due to menstruation in girls. There are three phases of iron sufficiency, which are iron depletion, non-anemic iron deficiency, and iron-deficiency anemia.

The impact of iron deficiency to children's growth and development already starts since non-anemic iron deficiency phase. Impact of iron deficiency to school-aged children including decreased cognitive function, behavior problems, increased risk of infections, and stunting. Meanwhile, impact of iron deficiency to adolescents are decreased cognitive function, decreased working ability, decreased sport ability, while especially in girls, increased risk of preterm birth and low birth weight infants, also slow down growth rate.

Keywords: anemia, iron-deficiency anemia, iron, growth and development, school-aged children, adolescent.

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