

# Detecting micronutrient deficiencies

Get to know the signs and symptoms

## Vitamin A



Vitamin A maintains many body functions and especially the immune system. It protects against night blindness and other eye illnesses too.

It protects children from dying from common childhood infectious illnesses like measles, malaria and diarrhoea.

### Some symptoms of vitamin A deficiency

- Tooth decay
- Inflammation of the cornea
- Rough skin or Dry skin
- Decreased immunity
- Growth retardation in children
- Loss of appetite
- Night blindness

## Calcium



Calcium builds and strengthens bones and teeth. It also supports muscle contraction and blood clotting. The body requires calcium in relatively large amounts.

Young children, women and elderly people who do not have access to calcium-rich foods suffer most from calcium deficiency.

### Some symptoms of calcium deficiency

- Weak teeth that easily fall off
- Lack of sleep
- Premenstrual cramps
- High blood pressure
- Osteoporosis – Bones easily fracture

## Vitamin C



Vitamin C is essential for healthy skin, teeth, gums and bones. It helps to heal wounds, produce red blood cells, builds immunity and fights bacterial infections.

Vitamin C also enhances the absorption of iron in the body.

### Some symptoms of vitamin C deficiency

- Skin that bruises and bleeds easily
- Swollen or painful joints
- Bleeding gums and nose bleeds
- Easily gets colds
- Poor digestion
- Scurvy
- Bleeding on fingertips, old scars and internal bleeding
- Soft, swollen purple gums
- Slow-healing wounds and fractures
- Loss of appetite

## Zinc



Zinc promotes normal growth and development.

It promotes wound healing, maintains a healthy immune system and helps prevent diarrhoea in young children

### Some symptoms of zinc deficiency

- Slow growth in children
- Loss of hair
- Various skin lesions
- Peeling skin
- Slow healing of wounds
- Frequent and recurring infections
- Severe diarrhoea
- Poor appetite
- Loss of taste and smell
- Fatigue and
- Sterility in males

## Iodine



Iodine is needed for normal mental functions and physical development as affected by the thyroid gland.

Iodine is also essential for proper foetal development

### Some symptoms of Iodine deficiency

- Goitre, or enlargement of the thyroid gland
- Cretinism
- Hypothyroidism which causes
  - weight loss
  - rapid heartbeat
  - appetite problems

Low levels or lack of these essential nutrients leads to poor health and diseases



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