



SICKLE CELL CLINIC

Anemia

What do red blood cells do?

- Anemia means your red cells are lower than normal. Sickle cell patients often have anemia.
- The doctors look at a hemoglobin level to know if your child has anemia. You should know your child's hemoglobin level. Please ask your doctor for your child's level.
- Sometimes during illness, the red blood cells are even lower than normal for your child.

What do red blood cells do?

- Red blood cells carry oxygen from your lungs to your body.
- Oxygen helps give your body energy.
- If your child has anemia, they may get tired more quickly than other children.

How will I know if my child's anemia is worse?

Your child may:

- ✓ Feel more tired.
- ✓ Look more pale.
- ✓ Have yellower eyes.
- ✓ Have darker urine.

Why do my child's eyes get yellow?

- Sickle cell causes red blood cells to get destroyed easily. This can make the eyes yellow.
- Some patients always have some yellow eyes as their red cells are always getting broken down.
- Sometimes, the eyes get more yellow. This means more of the red cells are being broken down.

What do I do if I am concerned my child is more anemic?

- Take your child to the Pediatrician. They can check your child's hemoglobin level.
- If you know what your child's usual hemoglobin level is, it will help the doctor know if more anemia has occurred.

How can I prevent my child's anemia?

- We do not know of any foods or supplements that will improve the anemia.
- Iron does not help anemia in children with sickle cell.
- Hydroxyurea is a medicine approved by the FDA (government) that can improve your child's anemia.

How will my child's anemia be treated?

- Your child may need a blood transfusion if the anemia gets bad.
- Your child may be offered hydroxyurea to improve your child's anemia.