

Fight against anaemia just got stronger

Study Reveals Double Fortified Salt Boosts Haemoglobin

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Rajkot: The states fight against anaemia has just got stronger. A study conducted by Bhavnagar Medical College has revealed that double fortified salt (DFS) developed by scientists at the Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSMCRI) significantly helps increase haemoglobin, the essential oxygen carrier in blood.

The study was conducted on albino rats and the results are extremely encouraging, college authorities said.

The double fortified salt was given to albino wistar rats into two groups. In the first group, anaemia was induced in the rats which were then given the salt. The other group had rats with normal haemoglobin level and were administered the salt.

We found that in both groups, haemoglobin level was increasing. In the normal albino wistar case, haemoglobin was reported at 18 gm per deciliter, said a member of the team that conducted the study.

Doctors say that the normal haemoglobin level in females is 11 gm/dl to 13 gm/dl while in males it is 11 gm/dl to 14 gm/dl.

Scientists say that DFS which they have developed will be a game changer for people in the country who are suffering from iron deficiency or anaemia. In Gujarat too, the number of people, especially women suffering from iron deficiency is alarming.

CSMCRI scientists developed an innovative route for fortification of salt with iodine and iron using inorganic compound, which exhibits white colour and retains its concentration intact over a long period of time. The salt has been tested for its stability under varying climatic conditions and the nutrients are found to be quite stable even under extreme atmospheric conditions.

According to scientists, DFS salt does not change its colour even after a long period of time unlike other salts.

DFS is prepared using known and available materials and in a simple and cost-effective manner. Moreover, there is a perception that if salt is not white then people do not purchase it. But here the color is retained even for a longer period of time. We want to ensure that the stability of all compounds in DFS is maintained and absorbed by the body which is the prime aim. Moreover, it would be affordable to all once it hits the market, said Dr P K Ghosh, director, CSMCRI.

CSMCRI is one of the national laboratories working under the aegis of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), one third of the world's population suffers from anaemia, mostly the iron deficiency one. India continues to be one of the countries with very high prevalence. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3) reveals the prevalence of anaemia to be 70-80% in children, 70% in pregnant women and 24% in adult men.

If everything goes as per plan, the DFS will be available in the market within the next one and a half year, Dr Ghosh said.

