

Abstract

Background of the Problem: Approximately 18% of U.S. children and 18.2% of Alaskan children participating in The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) have a hemoglobin reading below the fifth-percentile. The State of Alaska has established a Target Goal for 2010 to reduce cases of anemia in WIC children to 15% (www.hss.state.ak.us).

Methods: This is a cross-sectional study design consisting of a convenience sample with children ranging in age from 12-48 months from The Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center (ANHC) WIC Program. Twenty-five parents and guardians of WIC children with previously low and then normal hemoglobin levels answered ten questions on nutrition and anemia in a questionnaire format. Data was analyzed using EPI Info 3.3.2.

Results: This study found that nutrition counseling by the WIC dietitian may improve hemoglobin levels in young children participating in the WIC program.

Conclusions: While this study suggests that nutrition counseling may contribute to improved hemoglobin levels, several other factors can not be ruled out, and further studies on nutrition counseling and anemia in the WIC population are needed.