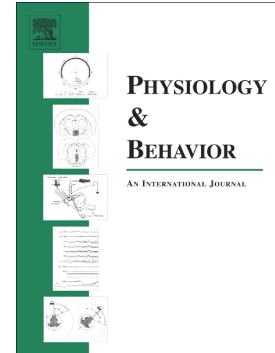


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Pica practices among apparently healthy women and their young children in Ghana

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1 **Pica Practices among Apparently Healthy Women and Their Young Children**
2 **in Ghana.**

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12 **Abstract**

13 **Background:** Pica is an increased appetite/craving for food or non-food substances like clay, and
14 chalk, and is strongly associated with iron deficiency (ID) anemia. This study assessed pica
15 practices among non-pregnant mothers and their children, 12-to-59 months, in an anaemia
16 endemic population in Ghana.

17 **Subjects and methods:** A cross-sectional quantitative survey was conducted in two randomly
18 selected districts in Northern Ghana. The researchers developed semi-structured questionnaires
19 with components on pica practice, history and experiences and administered via structured face-
20 to-face interviews with mothers (N=161). Of this population, 139 mothers had children 12-to-59
21 months in April 2012. Pica practice among children was reported by their mothers. Data was
22 analysed using SPSS version 23.0.

23 **Results:** Few mothers (4%) spontaneously reported pica (for uncommon food and/or non-food
24 substances) at the time of the interview, however, 27 (16.8%) mothers with pica were confirmed

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