Grow Healthy and Smart with Iodine

Iodine is important because:

- It makes the brain and body function properly.
- It is essential to the healthy development of unborn babies and young children.
- It helps pregnant women deliver healthy babies.

Everybody needs iodine!

Sources of Iodine:

- Fish
- Seafoods
- Seaweeds
- Iodized Salt

In areas where it is hard to get seafish and seafood, iodized salt is an important part of every diet.

Lack of iodine results in:

- Poor school performance in children
- Mental retardation
- Impaired mental and physical development of the child during pregnancy (Cretinism)
- Goiter

Everybody needs enough iodine in their diet to stay healthy and prevent goiter. Pregnant women and breastfeeding women, and young children need enough iodine to make sure the child develops well, mentally and physically. Iodine helps regulate nerve and muscle function, body temperature, growth, reproduction, and other body functions.
Sources of iodine found in our diet:

- 1 large egg can provide 15-25% of the recommended daily intake of iodine for Filipinos (depending on age group).
- 1 cup of boiled mature *patani* beans has a little more than 10% of the recommended daily intake of iodine for both children and adults.
- 1 serving (85 grams) of shrimp contains around 25% of recommended daily intake of iodine for Filipinos (6 years old and above) and almost 40% for children 5 years and below.

Use Iodized Salt!

- Always use iodized salt when cooking and eating family meals.
- Make sure the salt you buy carries the label “iodized”.
- Add iodized salt to food on the table or when it is nearly cooked. Do not cook iodized salt too long, it destroys the iodine.

Use Salt in Moderation

- Too much salt is not good for your heart and blood pressure. A tablespoon of salt is the recommended intake per day.
- Use herbs, spices, garlic and onions, or vegetables to flavor foods instead of too much salt.
- Instant food, condiments, chips and other preserved goods may contain high amounts of salt. Make sure to check the labels.
- The more processed foods you consume, the less table salt you should use.

*Adapted from Healthy Eating Resources, FAO, 2009*