

Diet and Health

Rickets

Symptoms

- ◆ Bones weakened;
- ◆ Weight of upper body on legs causes them to bow.

Causes

- ◆ Diet lacking in calciferol and where little calciferol can be made in the skin through exposure to sunlight;
- ◆ Diet may also lack sufficient calcium.

Anaemia

Symptoms

- ◆ Reduced red blood cell count;
- ◆ Lack of energy.

Causes

- ◆ Diet lacking in one or more of -
 - Iron;
 - Folic acid;
 - Cyanocobalamin;
- ◆ Malaria parasite which destroys red cells;
- ◆ Inherited sickle cell disease.

Osteoporosis

Symptoms

- ◆ Bones become weak and brittle.

Causes

- ◆ Loss of calcium from bones;
- ◆ May be affected by dietary deficiencies in calcium and calciferol;
- ◆ More common in women after menopause due to decrease in estrogen levels.

Food Additives

Chemical food additives include –

- Preservatives
- Antioxidants
- Colourings
- Flavourings
- Stabilisers
- Acidity regulators

Preservative – Sulfur dioxide

- Control of bacteria, yeasts and moulds;
- Used in dried foods, sausages, wine;
- May cause serious reaction in asthmatics who are sensitive to aspirin and related compounds.

Preservative – Nitrites and Nitrates

- Control of *Clostridium botulinum*, a dangerous bacterium, in the anaerobic conditions in some foods such as bacon and fish.
- May be converted in gut to carcinogenic (cancer-causing) compounds.

Artificial Colourings –Sunset Yellow (an azo dye)

- Possible adverse reactions such as asthma and skin rash in susceptible people.