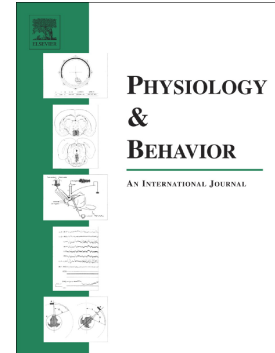


Accepted Manuscript

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

B.A.Z. Abu, V.L. van den Berg, J.E. Raubenheimer, V.J. Louw



PII: S0031-9384(16)31009-5
DOI: doi: [10.1016/j.physbeh.2017.04.012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2017.04.012)
Reference: PHB 11771
To appear in: *Physiology & Behavior*
Received date: 6 November 2016
Revised date: 21 March 2017
Accepted date: 13 April 2017

Please cite this article as: B.A.Z. Abu, V.L. van den Berg, J.E. Raubenheimer, V.J. Louw , Pica practices among apparently healthy women and their young children in Ghana. The address for the corresponding author was captured as affiliation for all authors. Please check if appropriate. Phb(2017), doi: [10.1016/j.physbeh.2017.04.012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2017.04.012)

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

3 **Abu BAZ^{1,2}, van den Berg VL², Raubenheimer JE³ and Louw VJ⁴,**

4 ¹ Nutritional Sciences Department, College of Human Sciences, Texas Tech University, P.O. Box 41270,
5 Lubbock, TX 79409, USA.

6 ²Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Free State, Postal
7 Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa.

8 ³Department of Biostatistics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Free State, Postal Box 339,
9 Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa.

10 ⁴Division Clinical Hematology, Department of Internal Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, University
11 of the Free State, Postal Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa.

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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