


WIC Fast Facts - Help Your Patients Stick With WIC Until Age 5



Did You Know?

 **\$50** WIC families save up to \$50 monthly on groceries

50% Children between the ages of 1 and 5 make up over 50% of all WIC participants 

WIC Needs Health Care Providers!

WIC Nutrition Professionals rely on information collected from health care providers to complete a nutrition assessment:

- A patient's current weight and height
- Hemoglobin and/or hematocrit
- Documentation of any acute or chronic medical conditions and/or medications
- Any special dietary needs or restrictions

WIC Bloodwork Facts

Among the 12 local WIC agencies in Connecticut, the rate of anemia ranges from 5.4%-18.6%. These rates include children enrolled in the CT WIC program ages 2-5 years. (March 2015) WIC has a target of $\leq 7.5\%$.

Help WIC fight the battle on childhood anemia:

Test hemoglobin and/or hematocrit at well child visits and follow-up when a WIC child participant has a low Hgb/Hct per MMWR and WIC guidelines!

Why WIC Works?

- Reduces hospitalizations and Medicaid costs
- Likely to receive preventative medical care
- Helps ensure a child's developmental readiness to enter kindergarten
- Increase food security for low-income families
- Contributes food dollars to local economies
- Increases local availability and access to fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods, of benefit to all Connecticut residents

Who is Eligible?

Someone who...

✓ **Is in one of the following categories:**

- **Children** (until they reach 5 years old)
- **Infants** (until their 1st Birthday) or
- **Women** (Pregnant, Breastfeeding, Post-Partum)

✓ **Meets income guidelines:**

- Participates in HUSKY Health (HUSKY A), SNAP and/or TFA
- Qualifies based on household income
- Families with private insurance may qualify. **Refer working families too.**

✓ **Has a nutrition risk:**

- Medical (Anthropometrics, Biochemical and Clinical)
- Nutrition based
- Environmental (Homelessness, Food security)

✓ **Lives in Connecticut**

WIC does not require proof of citizenship or alien status.



What WIC Provides

Nutrition Assessment, Counseling and Education

WIC Nutrition Professionals address the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Core Messages on whole grains, low fat milk, fruits and vegetables and child feeding using various teaching tools, activities and interventions.

- Evaluates nutritional inadequacies and medical conditions
- Use Motivational Interviewing to achieve individual and/or family goals
- Supports family's to achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- Addresses food security
- Provides follow-up on any referrals made outside of WIC

WIC makes Referrals

WIC staff provides referrals for medical and dental care, health insurance, child care, SNAP, housing, fuel assistance and a lot more.

Food Package Changes

A WIC Nutrition Professional works with a participant to select the WIC foods that best fit their needs. Food allergies, medical conditions and/or participant preference are taken into consideration when making food selections.

Responding to the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) review of the WIC Food Packages, the WIC Program now offers more options of low fat dairy, whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables and good sources of protein. These options include, but are not limited to yogurt, whole wheat pasta, dried or canned beans, low-fat or fat-free milk for all children aged 2-5 and whole milk for children age 12-24 months.

Breastfeeding Promotion and Support

WIC Nutrition Professionals and support staff promote breastfeeding as the optimal feeding choice, support mothers on meeting their breastfeeding goals especially when extended breastfeeding is desired and offer referrals to hospital/ community based breastfeeding classes and WIC services.

How You Can Help

Nutrition Assessment, Counseling and Education

- Encourage all families to consider applying for WIC
- Complete a WIC Certification/Medical Referral form for Infants/Children
- Consider reaching out to WIC to discuss concerns with a change in growth such as a BMI>85%

Refer to WIC Early and Often

- Encourage all parents of eligible children to Stick With WIC until age 5
- Display WIC posters
- Display and provide patients WIC informational brochures

Food Package Changes

Stay current with updates to WIC eligible foods by contacting the local WIC Program or visiting the Connecticut WIC Program/Department of Public Health webpage.

Breastfeeding Promotion and Support

- Promote breastfeeding as the optimal feeding choice
- Consider breastfeeding training for you and your staff
- Contact WIC for further collaborations

\$2 Million

WIC benefits redeemed monthly put roughly \$2 million into the local CT economy



Up to 211%

New England grocery stores saw up to a 211% increase in the purchase of 100% whole grain breads according to an article in the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities



To find out more call **1-800-741-2142**, visit ct.gov/dph/wic, or call the WIC clinic in your area.



NUTRITION IS JUST the BEGINNING.