



**RAMA
UNIVERSITY**

www.ramauniversity.ac.in

FACULTY OF NURSING

PICA

Tushar Noel
Nursing Tutor
R.C.N

DEFINITION

Pica is the persistent eating of substances such as dirt or paint that have no nutritional value.

Children with pica eat a variety of substances such as:

- Clay
- Cloth
- Sand
- Paint
- Chalk
- Glue

- Ice
- Hair
- Cigarette ashes
- Paper
- Metal
- Powder
- Animal feces
- Rubber bands
- Shampoo
- Soap

TYPES

- **Amylophagia**- consumption of starch
- **Coprophagy**- consumption of animal feces
- **Geophagy**- consumption of soil, clay or chalk
- **Hyalophagia**- consumption of glass
- **Pagophagia**- pathological consumption of ice
- **Trichophagia**- consumption of hair or wool
- **Urophagia**- consumption of urine

INCIDENCE

- An incidence of pica greater than 50% is considered normal in children aged 18 to 36 months.
- Pica is thought to decrease with age; one study showed that about 10% of children older than 12 years engage in pica

CAUSES

- Parental neglect
- Lack of supervision
- Food deprivation — *often seen in children living in poverty.*
- Developmental problems, such as *autism,*
- Brain abnormalities.
- Mental health conditions, such as *obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and schizophrenia.*

SIGN AND SYMPTOMS

- Stomach pain,
- Nausea
- Bloating due to intestinal or stomach blockage.
- Poor nutrition and fatigue.
- Eating non-food substances for more than a month
- consuming high amounts of soil

DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION

- History Collection
- Physical examination.

The doctor may use certain tests - such as

- X-rays and
- Blood tests- to check for *anemia* and look for toxins and other substances in the *blood*.
- Check intestinal obstruction.

Prevention Measures

- Preventing pica is not possible since it is a behavior that is developed.
- Don't leave the child alone.
- The best strategy that can be employed to avoid this disorder at the early stages.
- Educate couples with kids regarding various healthy eating habits and about the disorder itself.

- Give the child a healthy and nutritional diet.
- Effectively communicate with your child.
- Routine evaluation is a must.
- Encourage the child to eat healthy snacks when reaching for non-food items.
- Discrimination training between edible and non-edible.

THANK YOU