



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**  
*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.*

## **Helping Hand™**

*Health Education for Patients and Families*

# **Vitamin A and Eye Health**

Your child needs vitamin A to be healthy. It plays a key role in their vision and how it develops. Vitamin A deficiency is when you don't have enough vitamin A. This can lead to permanent blindness. However, vision loss from vitamin A deficiency can be reversed if treated quickly.

## **Foods**

Many foods have vitamin A in them. These include broccoli, carrots, cheese, avocados, eggs, and fish. A lot of foods in the United States, such as cereal and fruit snacks, have vitamin A added to them. Children with a balanced diet likely have a healthy vitamin A level. Your child is at risk for vitamin A deficiency if they:

- Are picky eaters.
- Avoid certain food groups.
- Have a medical condition that makes it hard to absorb Vitamin A from food, such as cystic fibrosis, liver disease.

## **Signs and Symptoms**

Signs your child may have low vitamin A levels include:

- Watery, red eyes.
- Complaining of eye pain.
- Bumping into objects in dim lighting.
- New loss of interest in reading, writing, sports, or watching shows.
- Burning or itching eyes.
- Cloudiness in the front of the eye.
- Asking you to turn off the lights often.
- Covering their eyes, squinting, blinking, or eye-rubbing in natural lighting.

Any time your child tells you they have trouble seeing, bring them to your local optometrist or ophthalmologist for an exam. If you have questions, call the Nationwide Children's Hospital eye clinic at (614) 722-4076.