



We would like to congratulate Wyatt Patzke. He competed at the state wrestling tournament in Portland, Ore., in the 2-A 138-pound class and took fourth place.

Wyatt is a freshman at Lakeview High School in Lakeview, Ore. He is the son of Carla and Clint Patzke and the grandson of Frank and Ann Logan.

Great job this year, Big Guy. We love you very much.

## SIERRA HILL TAKES GRAND PRIZE!!

Sierra Hill competed in the Future Chefs National Challenge on March 8 at McNary High School. She created her own recipe, Mexican Zucchini Burrito Boats, and won the GRAND PRIZE! Sierra won lots of great prizes and will now go to nationals! Parents Jeremy and Beth Hill were very proud of their “future chef!” Congratulations, Sierra!



### Tribal RV park discounts available

*\*Subject to availability*

Tribal members receive a 15% discount on spaces at Logan Road RV Park located in Lincoln City, Ore. Call 877-LOGANRV or visit [loganroadrvpark.com](http://loganroadrvpark.com) for more information.\*

Tribal members receive a 15% discount on spaces at Hee Hee Illahee RV Resort located in Salem, Ore. Call 877-564-7295 or visit [heeheeillahee.com](http://heeheeillahee.com) for more information.\*

## Why check my child's hemoglobin?

By Nancy Ludwig, MS, RDN, LD, Head Start Consulting Nutritionist

As part of my role as a consultant nutritionist to Siletz Tribal Head Start, I offer information for families. Today's topic is about the Head Start screening process of checking hemoglobin.

Head Start parents have rights to refuse tests. It is important to be informed about the purpose of the tests in order to make informed decisions regarding the well-being of your child.

What is hemoglobin? It is a protein found in the red blood cells. These cells are responsible for carrying oxygen around the body. In addition to transporting oxygen, hemoglobin carries carbon dioxide out of the cells and into the lungs. Carbon dioxide is then released as a person exhales.

Having low hemoglobin can make it difficult for the body to perform these functions. When the body doesn't have enough red blood cells or when they do not work properly to transport oxygen, the body doesn't have what it needs to function well. Low hemoglobin is one form of anemia.

Symptoms in children are often different than those experienced by adults. These can include poor neurological development, disturbed behavior, paleness, rapid heartbeat, difficulty learning and low levels of concentration. This is contrasted with the adults who primarily report feeling sluggish and tired.

What causes low hemoglobin levels? Iron deficiency is the most common

cause because iron is also a required part of hemoglobin (its structure). Usually this lack of iron is from not consuming enough iron-rich foods. Even with iron-rich foods, however, sometimes the body has a problem with absorption that causes low hemoglobin.

Common absorption problems in children include gluten intolerance (such as celiac) or lead exposure. In celiac or another digestive disease with malabsorption, not enough iron is absorbed to make hemoglobin.

If lead levels are high, hemoglobin will be low because lead and iron compete for absorption. Lead must be treated in order to allow normal iron absorption. Lead is another test offered in Head Start to support the health of your child.

Interestingly, when children drink excessive milk, they also tend to have low hemoglobin due to the competition of iron and calcium for absorption. That is why they say that pregnant women should not to take their prenatal vitamin with milk.

Women who are menstruating lose iron in their menstrual blood. Pregnant women have an increased need for iron and therefore may also be at increased risk of developing anemia. Children are often at risk if they are born to a mother who was anemic during pregnancy because the child is born with less stored iron.

People who have chronic health conditions, including autoimmune conditions, liver disease, thyroid disease, inflammatory bowel disease and SIBO (small intestinal bacterial overgrowth) may have lower hemoglobin levels, which increases the chances of developing anemia.

Athletes who do vigorous exercise are also at greater risk as exertion can lead to a breakdown of red blood cells in the bloodstream. In some instances, specific types of genetic disorders such as thalassemia and sickle-cell disease are responsible for this condition. Low hemoglobin also is found in people who have a medical history of alcoholism.

Children with very low iron may also develop a condition called pica, which causes them to eat dirt, chew rocks, chew massive amounts of ice or eat laundry starch. This also occurs in adults and in pregnancy. Pica is reversed when hemoglobin is normalized.

It is important to look for the root cause in order to find the best treatment.

Anemia treatment varies, depending on the cause of the condition. Changes in diet or dietary supplements can help people who have iron deficiency anemia. If the anemia is caused by another condition, treating the underlying disease will often alleviate the problem.

Often, improvement in the level of hemoglobin can be achieved by a diet that is rich in iron. Diet can also help to maximize absorption with other nutrients. Iron-rich foods include meat and fish, dried beans, eggs, dried fruits – such as dates and figs, broccoli, green beans, green leafy vegetables – such as kale and spinach, nuts, seeds and peanut butter.

While consuming iron in foods or supplements is important, specific nutrients such as vitamins C and A can boost the amount of iron absorbed. Foods rich in vitamin C include citrus fruits, strawberries and leafy green vegetables. Taking a vitamin C supplement may also help.

Vitamin A and beta-carotene (the plant form of vitamin A) can aid the body in absorbing and using iron. Foods rich in vitamin A include fish, liver, squash, sweet potatoes, kale and collards. Foods high in beta-carotene include yellow, red, and orange fruits and vegetables, such as carrots, sweet potatoes, squash, cantaloupe and mangos.

Hemoglobin can also be improved by supplementing with prescription or over-the-counter iron. It is important to work with a health practitioner to determine the root cause.

It is also possible to have serious problems from taking too much iron or vitamin A. Furthermore; iron supplementation can cause side effects, such as constipation, nausea and vomiting. Supplements usually cause levels of iron to increase gradually over a few weeks. A doctor may recommend taking the supplements for several months to increase the body's iron stores.

Not all individuals need more iron. There is a disease called hemochromatosis that is an over-storage of iron and if not treated can cause serious health problems. It cannot be diagnosed by checking hemoglobin alone. Interestingly, the author (your Head Start nutrition consultant) has this condition (of too much iron).

Siletz Tribal Head Start offers nutritional support at no cost to Head Start families. This usually occurs over the telephone. If you have questions or nutrition concerns about your Head Start child, please contact your teacher or the director and ask to speak to the nutritionist.