

Recognizing Signs of Malnutrition

- *Malnutrition can severely affect your child's health and development.*
- *Detecting and addressing signs of malnutrition can save a child's life and enhance his or her potential.*
- *This document addresses two forms of malnutrition: wasting and stunting.*

SIGNS OF MALNUTRITION:

Review the signs of malnutrition below to become familiar with what to watch for in your child. These signs do not represent every sign that may occur, and different children could present different signs.

ENERGY

- Lack of energy
- Dizziness
- Weakness



BODY'S DEFENSE SYSTEM

- Frequently ill
- Frequent diarrhea
- Slow wound healing
- Long recovery times



CONCENTRATION AND MOOD

- Difficulty concentrating
- Slow to react
- Easily irritated



APPEARANCE

- Dry, breakable hair, lightening of color, hair loss
- Sunken eyes, hollow cheeks
- Swollen, bleeding gums; decaying teeth
- Swollen abdomen, small legs, and arms
- Numbness and swelling in hands and feet
- Dry, scaly skin, bruising easily, swelling under the skin (edema)



APPETITE

- Reduced appetite
- Lack of interest in food and drinks



Take the Next Steps

It is not always easy to detect if a child is malnourished. They can look like other children in the area. If you believe your child could be malnourished:

- **Consult with a health professional.**
A professional can determine your child's nutritional status and provide additional guidance.
- **Meet with your Relief Society or Elders Quorum president to ask for guidance and help if needed.**
They can support you and help you find resources from the community and the Church to meet the nutritional needs of your child.