

Use double-fortified salt in meals, schools told

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Students eat a mid-day meal at a school in Jalandhar. File Photo

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To maintain good health among children, all government schools in the district have been told by the Director General, School Education, Punjab, to use double-fortified salt (that includes iron and iodine in sufficient quantity) in mid-day meals. The instructions have been issued through a letter to district education officers and principals of schools.

The instructions read, "Some schools have not been using double-fortified salt while preparing mid-day meals for children. It is, therefore, directed to all schools to use this salt as it is important for the health and nutrition of children."

Mid-day meal district manager Baljinder Singh said, "The use of double-fortified salt has been advised because iodine in the salt will eliminate thyroid deficiency in children. The deficiency of iodine obstructs a child's growth and it struggles to concentrate. In some cases, mental retardation is also common. Moreover, it also prevents iron deficiency among children who do not take proper diet. Children from three years should consume double-fortified salt."

The double fortification of salt with iodine and iron was an approach to reduce anaemia and iodine-deficiency disorders among children, he added.

However, he also said there was limited supply of the salt as it was not available widely in urban and rural areas. He said a request had been sent to the district manager to increase the supply of standard-quality salt in all schools where mid-day meals are prepared.