

## Infant Up to 6 Months Old of WIC Mother or of a Woman Who Would Have Been Eligible During Pregnancy

**Definition/  
cut-off value**

An infant < six months of age whose mother was a WIC Program participant during pregnancy or whose mother's medical records document that the woman was at nutritional risk during pregnancy because of detrimental or abnormal nutritional conditions detectable by biochemical or anthropometric measurements or other documented nutritionally related medical conditions.

**Participant  
category and  
priority level**

**Category**

**Priority**

Infants

II

**Justification**

Federal Regulations designate these conditions for WIC eligibility (3).

WIC participation during pregnancy is associated with improved pregnancy outcomes. An infant whose nutritional status has been adequately maintained through WIC services during gestation and early infancy may decline in nutritional status if without these services and return to a state of elevated risk for nutrition related health problems. Infants whose mother was at medical/nutritional risk during pregnancy, but did not receive those services, may also be thought of as a group at elevated risk for morbidity and mortality in the infant period (1, 2).

WIC participation in infancy is associated with lower infant mortality, decreased anemia for infants and improvements in growth (head circumference, height and weight). Infants on WIC are more likely to consume iron-fortified formula and cereal and less likely to consume cow's milk before one year, thus lowering the risk of developing iron deficiency anemia (1, 2).

**References**

1. Disbrow DD. The costs and benefits of nutrition services: a literature review. *J.Am.Diet.Assoc.* 1989;89:S3-66.
2. Ryan AS, Martinez GA, Malec DJ. The effect of the WIC program on nutrient intakes of infants, 1984. *Med.Anthropol.* 1985;9:153-72.
3. WIC Program Regulations; Section 246.7(e)(1)(ii).