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# YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

*Presented by the medical professionals at Midcoast Pediatrics*

## Juvenile Hemochromatosis

Hemochromatosis is an inherited genetic disorder that causes the body to absorb far too much iron. Although it is a disease most commonly associated with older adults, since it rarely manifests before middle age, juvenile hemochromatosis does sometimes occur. Hemochromatosis that occurs before the age of 30 can manifest in infancy or at any time throughout childhood. It can cause problems such as diabetes and heart arrhythmia, as well as problems with sexual development and later infertility. Symptoms of too much iron include fatigue, dramatic weight change, heart irregularities, joint pain, depression, skin discoloration, upper-right-quadrant abdominal pain, and in girls menstrual irregularities. Juvenile hemochromatosis is treated by regularly donating blood, which can slow or even reverse the disease.

*HINT: Children with juvenile hemochromatosis have inherited mutated genes from each parent. An individual with only one mutated gene is called a carrier.*

**We are pleased to present this column as a public service. Here, our qualified pediatricians and staff have dedicated their lives and careers to caring for the well-being of your children. We will effectively diagnose and treat any illnesses your children may have and work with families to maintain the overall quality of your children's health. For further information about today's column, call MIDCOAST PEDIATRICS at 207-721-8333. We are located at 121 Medical Center Drive, Suite 2600, Brunswick. New patients are welcome.**

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