

## POSSIBLE HEALTH EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH HUMAN GEOPHAGIC PRACTISE: AN OVERVIEW

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### Abstract

Human Geophagia, a phenomenon widely practised especially in Africa, is the craving and deliberate ingestion of clayey soils. It is frequently practised by women and children to relieve hunger, supply nutritional deficiencies or as folk medicine. Geophagic individuals are very selective in the type of clayey soil they consume, where it is obtained, and its physical state; as well as its colour, smell and texture. Though clayey soils are medicinal, they could equally be risky and hazardous to human health. Reports have associated geophagia with iron deficiency leading to anaemia, infestation with geohelminths, and abrasion of the gastro-intestines. This overview brings awareness on clayey soils consumed and throws light on the human health associated effects.