

Iron Deficiency Anemia: Symptoms, Causes, Prevention

Iron deficiency anemia is the most prevalent type of anemia. It is a condition caused by the lack or low count of red blood cells or hemoglobin in the blood. Iron is essential in maintaining several body functions, including the production of hemoglobin, the molecule in your blood that carries oxygen. Iron is also important to maintain healthy cells, skin, hair, and nails. When there are low levels of iron in the bloodstream, the body may not get enough amount of oxygen it requires.

Though this condition is common, many people are not aware of iron deficiency. While they can experience some common symptoms. Thus, this condition may be usually treated with [iron supplements](#) and iron-rich diet.

Symptoms of

Iron-deficiency Anemia

- a. Strange cravings to eat items that are not food, such as dirt, ice, or clay, chalk, etc
- b. A tingling or crawling feeling in the legs
- c. Tongue swelling or soreness
- d. Fast or irregular heartbeat
- e. Cold hands and feet
- f. Shortness of breath
- g. General fatigue
- h. Brittle nails
- i. Headaches
- j. Weakness
- k. Dizziness
- l. Pale skin

Causes of Iron-deficiency Anemia

Iron deficiency anemia relates mainly to the lack of hemoglobin in the blood. Bone marrow, which is present in the center of the bone needs iron to make hemoglobin, a red protein that provides color to the red blood cells that transport oxygen to the body's organs. Certainly, due to the lack of adequate iron, the body cannot produce enough hemoglobin for red blood cells. Finally, it results in iron-deficiency anemia. Specifically, this type of anemia can be caused by:

1. During pregnancy and breastfeeding, the metabolic demands may deplete a woman's iron stores
2. A poor or low iron diet, especially in infants, children, teens, vegans, and vegetarians
3. Certain drugs, foods, and caffeinated drinks
4. Increased frequency of blood donation
5. A decreased ability to absorb iron
6. Blood loss/Menstruation

1. Pregnancy:

Iron deficiency anemia is a common condition in pregnancy. The growing fetus needs a lot of iron because it may lead to low iron levels, which is a risk for mother as well as the growing fetus.

Furthermore, a pregnant woman has an increased blood volume in her body. This larger volume of blood demands additional iron to meet its daily requirements.

2. An Iron-Poor Diet:

In particular, your body regularly gets iron from the foods you eat. If your diet is deficient in iron, over time it can lead to iron deficiency. For example, foods that are rich in iron include meat, eggs, leafy green vegetables, and iron-fortified foods. For proper growth and development, infants, children, and teens, especially during puberty, need iron from their regular diets.

Poor nutrition and insufficient consumption of foods high in iron are the main causes of iron deficiency anemia.

8.7 mg daily for men over 18 and 14.8 mg daily for women between the ages of 19 and 50.

8.7 mg daily for over-50s women the suggested daily intake of iron.

To compensate for this, get the required amount of iron daily by eating a balanced diet.

Include lots of fruits and vegetables, lean meats, fish, eggs, nuts, and legumes in your diet.

Massive Blood Loss

Blood loss can lead to anemia, whether acute or chronic.

Examples include significant menstrual or gastrointestinal bleeding. Anemia can occur in several ways:

Chronic blood loss

This type of bleeding lasts for a long time and is often caused by diseases such as uterine fibroids, polyps, colon or rectal cancer, or inflammatory bowel disease, which can lead to persistent gastrointestinal bleeding.

Acute blood loss

This type of blood loss is sudden and often occurs due to accidents or operations that result in the loss of a large amount of blood.

4. Decreased Ability to Absorb Iron:

Iron from food is directly absorbed into the bloodstream in the small intestine. In particular, an intestinal disorder, such as celiac or Crohn's disease, which affects the intestinal ability to absorb nutrients from digested food, may lead to iron deficiency anemia. In some cases, if the part of the small intestine has been bypassed or removed surgically, that may also affect the ability to absorb iron and other nutrients.

Prevention of Iron Deficiency Anemia



How to Prevent the Iron Deficiency Anemia

Addressing the root reasons and making sure that the body receives enough iron through diet are both important components of preventing iron deficiency anemia.

In order to avoid iron deficiency anemia, try these strategies:

Iron-rich Diets should be consumed

Iron-rich foods including red meat, poultry, fish, beans, almonds, leafy green vegetables, and poultry can help avoid iron deficiency anemia.

Vegetarians may need to eat more iron-rich foods to prevent anemia.

Prevent Chronic Blood Loss

If you have a medical condition that results in chronic blood loss, such as heavy menstrual bleeding.

It's crucial to engage with a healthcare professional to address this and treat the underlying cause to avoid iron deficiency anemia.

Take Iron Supplements

To make sure that enough iron is taken to meet the body's needs, iron supplements may be required for some persons with elevated iron demands, such as pregnant women, growing children, and people with anemia.