

# anemia during pregnancy

Your body requires different things during pregnancy. **Iron** needs **increase** during pregnancy because iron helps to build **red blood cells that carry oxygen** around your body and to your baby.

Not having enough iron during pregnancy can cause **iron-deficiency anemia**.

## if your body absorbs less:

Things that make it hard for your body to absorb iron:

1. Chronic medical conditions
2. Medications like antacids

## if iron is low in the diet:

1. Not eating enough iron
2. Eating a vegetarian or vegan diet

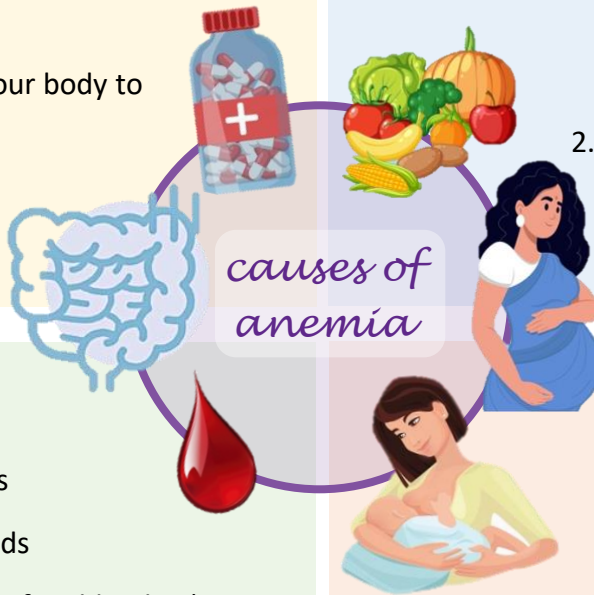
## if there is iron loss:

1. Blood loss because of ulcers
2. Blood loss with heavy periods
3. Chronic inflammation (even if no bleeding)

## if iron needs are high:

Times in life when you are growing your blood volume:

1. as a teenager
2. during pregnancy
3. when you are breastfeeding



## signs and symptoms



FATIGUE



CHEST PAINS



BRITTLE NAILS



DIZZINESS



FEELING COLD



IRREGULAR  
HEARTBEAT



PALE SKIN



INSOMNIA



HEADACHE



HAIR BREAKAGE

Always **talk to your health care provider** if you have issues with anemia or have these signs and symptoms.

**Pregnancy** is a natural risk for anemia.

Your **prenatal care visits** are important times to check.



# anemia during pregnancy

**Diet choices** make a difference in your body's iron levels.

**WHAT** food you eat, **HOW MUCH** you eat, and **WHEN** you eat all make a difference.



## IRON from meat

Iron is **easily absorbed** from **red meat, poultry, and fish**.

|         |       |          |         |             |
|---------|-------|----------|---------|-------------|
| chicken | beef  | salmon   | oysters | clams       |
| turkey  | steak | sardines | mussels | canned tuna |



## Other IRON foods

**Good sources** of iron can come from foods like:

|                           |       |         |             |
|---------------------------|-------|---------|-------------|
| dark green, leafy veggies | nuts  | beans   | eggs        |
| iron-fortified cereals    | seeds | lentils | dried fruit |

**Vitamin C** binds to iron and helps your body to use it.

Eat vitamin C foods **together with iron foods**.

citrus fruits   tomatoes   berries   kiwi   peppers

## Foods that HELP use IRON



**Calcium** decreases iron use. Do not eat with iron foods.

cow's milk   black tea   peppermint   grapes  
dairy products   cocoa   coffee   apples

## Foods that DECREASE using IRON



## tips for your best iron intake



**Eat foods together** that have iron and vitamin C. Try orange juice with eggs, beans with peppers & tomatoes, or fresh berries with nuts.

Your body needs **MORE** iron and nutrition during pregnancy. Taking a **prenatal vitamin** helps you meet these important needs.



**Avoid** drinking coffee, tea, or milk when you eat iron-food meals. Try orange juice or water with lemon with meals.

Eat foods **high in iron at every meal**. Try to have snacks that have both iron foods and foods with vitamin C.



Scan the Pursuit app QR code for more tips, recipes, and health education for pregnancy nutrition



Use our code:  
**BMCFMF**

# treatment for anemia

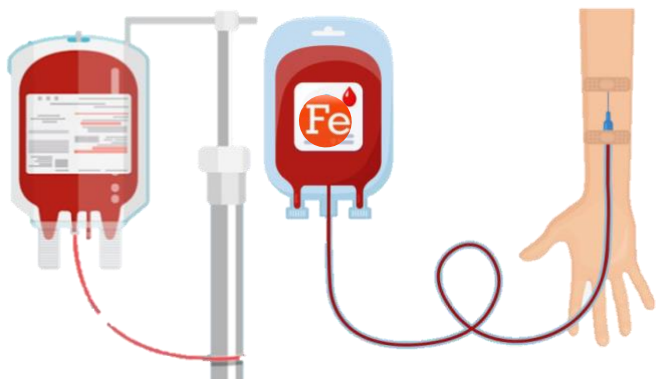
If you have anemia, one type of treatment is an **oral iron supplement**.

The oral supplements can be a **tablet** or **liquid**. Sometimes oral iron supplements can cause uncomfortable symptoms.

## iron supplements



## intravenous (IV) iron



Some of the time, anemia can be **severe** or oral iron is **not tolerated**.

You may need more than oral iron.

You may need **IV iron** to help increase your iron levels more quickly.

**Repeat bloodwork** will help see if your iron levels have improved after your iron treatment.

## managing uncomfortable symptoms

Some of the time, taking oral iron supplements can cause uncomfortable symptoms.

**Talk to your health care provider** if you have these symptoms and if they stop you from taking your iron.



### constipation

1. Drink 8 or more glasses of water or prune juice each day
2. Eat high-fiber foods like raw fruits/vegetables, whole grains, beans
3. Take walks or do light exercise
4. Your provider may prescribe **stool softeners or laxatives**



### heartburn

1. Eat small meals 5-6 times per day
2. Avoid eating close to bedtime
3. Avoid caffeine and spicy, acidic, or greasy/fried foods
4. Drink liquids at different times instead of with meals
5. Prop your upper body with a pillow when you sleep
6. Talk to your provider about **antacids or medications**



### nausea and vomiting