



# QUESTIONS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ANSWERS

## **What Is Iron Deficiency Anemia?**

Iron deficiency anemia (ah-nee-mee-ah) is a condition caused by a lack of iron in the blood. Iron is a mineral in the blood. It is needed to make healthy red blood cells. It is the job of red blood cells to carry oxygen to all parts of the body. A good supply of oxygen is needed to have energy. When there is a deficiency (not enough) iron in the blood we have iron deficiency anemia.

### **What are the signs of iron deficiency anemia?**

- Pale skin
- Feeling tired
- Feeling weak
- Feeling light- headed
- Dizziness
- Quick to get upset
- Short of breath
- Sore tongue
- Nails that break easily
- Headaches at the front of the head
- A blue tint to the whites of the eyes
- Not wanting to eat (most often in children)

**There may be no signs if the anemia is mild.**

### **What causes iron deficiency anemia?**

The causes of iron deficiency anemia may include:

- A diet that is too low in iron
- The body cannot take in iron from your food
- Loss of blood due to:

Heavy bleeding during periods  
Bleeding in the gut due to ulcers  
Taking certain medicines that reduce pain and swelling

**How do I know if I don't have enough iron my blood? (iron deficiency)**

Your doctor will order a blood test to see if you have enough iron in your blood.

**How is iron deficiency treated?**

You can take iron pills by mouth. It may take a few months to increase iron levels in the blood. Sometimes a side effect of iron pills is constipation (difficult time having a BM).

In some cases a patient may need to increase iron levels in a hurry. This may be due to severe illness or loss of a lot of blood. A quicker way to increase iron levels is to get iron injected into the body. This treatment is done at the doctor's office. Patients commonly get one treatment a week for 3 weeks.

**Is there anything I need to know before I start iron injection treatment?**

- You do not need to avoid any food, drinks, or activities during treatments unless your doctor says so.
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist (farm-a-sist) about any medicines or over-the-counter drugs you are taking before you start treatment.
- Follow up with your doctor after you finish treatment.

**Are there any side effects with iron injection treatment?**

The most common side effects are:

- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Feeling sick to the stomach
- Throwing up
- Loose and watery BM (diarrhea)
- Cramps
- Headaches
- 

**Are there any foods that help me get more iron?**

See attached sheets.

## **Finding a Doctor**

Our doctors serve with a deep respect for all. Their goal is to give the best care and education whether or not a person can pay.

### **St. Vincent Charity Hospital**

2351 E. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115  
216-861-6200  
TTY: Ohio Relay 1-800-750-0705

### **St. Luke's Health Care Center**

11201 Shaker Boulevard  
Cleveland, Ohio 44104  
216-721-6900

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**ST. VINCENT CHARITY  
MEDICAL CENTER**

*A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System*

## Good Sources of Iron

| <b>Food Item</b>                   | <b>Amount of Iron (Mg)</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Clams Canned 3oz.                  | 23.8                       |
| *Fortified Cereals 1-2oz.          | 1.8-18                     |
| Quaker cooked oatmeal ½ c          | 18                         |
| Oysters cooked moist heat 3oz.     | 10.2                       |
| Liver and organ meats cooked 3oz.  | 5.2-9.9                    |
| Instant oatmeal fortified 1pkt.    | 8                          |
| Spinach ½ cup cooked               | 3.5                        |
| Dried beans ½ cup cooked           | 2.2-4                      |
| Beef Chuck lean 3oz. cooked        | 3.1                        |
| Beef Steak lean Sirloin 3oz cooked | 2.3                        |
| Lamb shoulder 3oz cooked           | 2.3                        |

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Shrimp canned 3oz       | 2.3 |
| Duck 3oz. roasted       | 2.3 |
| Ground Beef cooked 3oz. | 2.2 |
| Tomato puree 1/2c       | 2.2 |
| Prune juice 4oz.        | 1.7 |

\*Total Raisin Bran, Product 19, & Complete Oat Flakes all have 18 mg