

KEEPING AN EYE ON YOUR Iron Levels

Iron is an essential nutrient the body needs to maintain energy levels¹ and concentration²



Iron deficiency is one of the leading risk factors for disability and death worldwide.^{3,4} Yet it is commonly underdiagnosed.⁵

Treating iron deficiency can improve health and well being^{6,7}



Should You Get Your Iron Levels Checked?

Signs that you may have iron deficiency include:

- FATIGUE**
Feeling mentally tired, irritable, dizzy or losing concentration quickly^{7,8}
- HAIR LOSS**
Losing clumps of hair or more hair than normal⁹
- SHORTNESS OF BREATH**
Can't be as active as you would like^{4,15}
- PALENESS**
Most noticeable on the face, nails, inner mouth, and lining of eyes¹⁰
- COLD INTOLERANCE**
Cold hands and/or feet may mean that there is not enough oxygen being delivered in the blood^{11,12}
- BRITTLE NAILS**
Nails that chip and crack easily¹³

There are also things that can make you more likely to be iron deficient:



If you suffer from a **chronic disease**, for example heart failure,¹⁶ inflammatory bowel¹⁷ and kidney disease¹⁸



If you experience **heavy menstrual bleeding**¹⁹



If you are **pregnant**²⁰ or have **recently given birth**²¹

How are My Iron Levels Measured?

A **blood test** is used which can provide information about your iron and red blood cell levels.



Always talk to your doctor about your blood test results and what they mean.

MAIN LABORATORY TESTS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF IRON

Test	What it Measures	Normal* Levels
A Complete Blood Count	The number of red blood cells and amount of haemoglobin in your blood ²²	Haemoglobin ^{23, 24} Men over 15 yrs More than 13-17 g/dL Women over 15 yrs (not pregnant) More than 12-16 g/dL
TSAT, or serum transferrin saturation²⁵	The amount of iron in your blood that is attached to a substance called transferrin	20-50% ²⁴
Serum ferritin	Represents the iron stores you have in your body ²⁶	30-300ng/mL ²⁴
Serum iron	The total amount of iron present in the serum of your blood ²⁶	50-180 µg/dL ²⁴
Serum iron TIBC, or Total Iron-Binding Capacity (transferrin)	The amount of iron your blood can carry ²²	50-180 µg/dL ²⁷

*Normal values may differ depending on the assay used.

Why are My Iron Levels Low?



IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DISCUSS THE REASON FOR YOUR IRON DEFICIENCY WITH YOUR DOCTOR:

The most common cause of iron deficiency anaemia in adult men and postmenopausal women is blood loss from the stomach or intestines²⁸

Celiac disease is often diagnosed after signs such as iron deficiency anaemia are detected²⁹

Iron deficiency anaemia may be associated with chronic underlying disease which requires treatment^{30,14} or even with some form of cancer³¹



For example, could your iron deficiency anaemia be due to any **medication** you are taking, **extensive exercise** increasing your iron requirements, a **diet** where iron can be limited (e.g. vegetarian, a vegan) or are there signs of **inflammation** in your blood?



What Happens if My Iron Levels are Low?

Iron deficiency can be treated, reducing symptoms such as fatigue and improving quality of life^{6,8}



The cause and severity of your iron deficiency will help your doctor decide which treatment is right for you, either dietary changes, iron tablets or an intravenous administration and they will discuss these options with you.

Even if you are prescribed a treatment, making sure you have a diet which includes a variety of iron-rich foods alongside foods that help iron absorption is important for maintaining your iron levels.



Vifor Pharma, a company of the Vifor Pharma Group, is a world leader in the discovery, development, manufacturing and marketing of pharmaceutical products for the treatment of iron deficiency. The company also offers a diversified portfolio of prescription medicines as well as over-the-counter (OTC) products. Vifor Pharma, headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, has an increasingly global presence and a broad network of affiliates and partners around the world.

For more information about Vifor Pharma and its parent company Vifor Pharma Group, please visit www.viforpharma.com

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