

Anemia in Pregnancy

What is anemia?

Anemia is a condition that causes a decrease in the body's ability to carry oxygen. During pregnancy, the mother's body increases the amount of blood by 40% to aid in growing the baby. This increase in blood volume can result in the need for an increased amount of dietary iron in the mother's diet to meet the maternal and fetal requirements. Iron levels are checked at the initial prenatal visit, and again around 28 weeks to ensure a woman's iron is adequate.

What are the symptoms of anemia?

- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Dizziness
- Memory problems
- Lack of focus
- Headaches
- Pale color to the skin or mucous membranes

What do I do if I am anemic?

If your iron levels are low, it may be necessary to add additional iron through supplementation. This is usually done by taking iron pills.

What are good sources of iron?

- Meat sources (liver, lean meats)
- Vegetables (broccoli, spinach, kale, beet greens, dried peas, dried beans)
- Fruits (prunes, apricots)
- Other sources (eggs, fish, turkey, peanut butter, molasses, whole grains)

How do I take iron?

- Vitamin C helps the body absorb iron more efficiently. Be sure you are getting Vitamin C by including oranges/orange juice, grapefruit, strawberries, cantaloupe, broccoli, tomatoes, raw cabbage, bean sprouts, and cauliflower in your diet.
- Caffeine intake at mealtimes can reduce the absorption of iron. Avoid caffeine when taking iron supplements.
- Do not take with milk.
- Usual recommended iron supplement: Nature's Made ferrous sulfate (iron) 325-650mg per day. Your provider will determine the correct dose for you.

Side effects of iron:

- Constipation
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Dark or black stools

Food	Serving Size	Iron (mgs)
Beef liver, cooked	3 oz	7.5
Clams, raw	3 oz	5.2
Oysters, raw	3 oz (6 medium)	4.8
Roast beef, cooked	3 oz	3.1
Hamburger, cooked	3 oz	2.6
Soybeans, cooked	½ cup	2.3
Lima beans, cooked	½ cup	2.3
Almonds	½ cup	1.9
Canned tuna	3 oz	1.6
Ham	3 oz	1.2
Peanut butter	4 Tbsp	1.2
Chicken, cooked	3 oz	1
Eggs	1 large	1
Bread and Cereal		
Total cereal	1 oz	17-18
Life, Kix	1 oz	7-8
Cream of Wheat	¾ cup	7.7
Oatmeal (instant, fortified)	1 pkt (6 oz)	6.3
Wheat Chex, Cheerios, Raisin Bran, Special K	1 oz	4-6
Spaghetti, enriched, cooked	1 cup	1.4
Bread, enriched or whole wheat	1 slice	0.7
Fruits		
Dried apricots	½ cup	3.8
Raisins	½ cup	1.7
Prune juice	½ cup	1.5
Vegetables		
Spinach, cooked	½ cup	3.2
Potato, baked	1 medium	2.8
Peas, cooked	½ cup	1.2
Squash, acorn, cooked	½ cup	1
Brussel sprouts, cooked	½ cup	1
Broccoli, cooked	½ cup	0.9
Tomato juice	½ cup	0.7