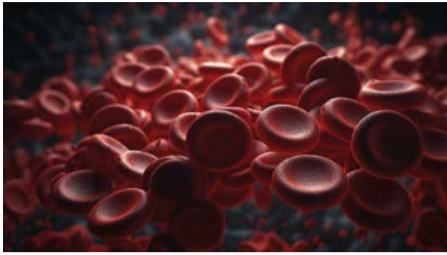


# Globally, anaemia is a major public health issue



Children, adolescents, pregnant women, and postpartum women are all at risk of being affected by anaemia, a serious global public health issue. According to the World Health Organisation, more than 40% of children aged 6 to 59 months and 37% of pregnant women are anaemic, as well as 30% of women aged 15 to 49.

In iron deficiency, there are no mobilisable iron stores. Due to a long-term negative iron balance, the tissues are deprived of iron.

## Facts:

1. The normal haemoglobin range is generally defined as 13.2 to 16.6 grams (g) of haemoglobin per decilitre (dL) of blood for men and 11.6 to 15 g/dL for women.
2. Iron deficiency anaemia compromises immunity and increases the likelihood of illness in all age groups. In childhood, having iron deficiency anaemia may adversely impact the cognitive, behavioural, and physical development of children. As an adult, it could impair your physical capability and, in turn, your work performance.
3. An estimated 2 billion individuals worldwide are anaemic, with more than 1 billion suffering from iron deficiency anaemia.
4. Anaemia is responsible for 20% of all maternal fatalities.
5. Worm infections, malaria, and other infectious disorders such as HIV and TB exacerbate iron-deficient anaemia in many underdeveloped nations.
6. It is estimated that 50% of pregnant woman and over 40% of preschool children in poor nations are anaemic.



## Am I at risk?

Most women and those on low-iron diets suffer from iron deficiency. These categories are more likely to suffer from iron deficiency anaemia:

1. Heavy menstruating women.
2. Those who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have just given birth.
3. Individuals who have had significant surgery or bodily trauma.
4. People suffering from peptic ulcer illness.
5. People who have had bariatric surgeries.
6. Vegetarians, vegans, and those whose diets lack iron-rich foods.
7. Children who consume more than 16 to 24 ounces of cow's milk per day; anaemia caused by excessive cow milk consumption can be caused by dietary imbalance, decreased consumption of solids, and increased consumption of an iron-deficient milk diet; Cow's milk contains a high concentration of non-heme iron, which is not as digestible as heme iron.

Iron deficiency anaemia is the most common type of anaemia worldwide, even though anaemia can take many other forms. Symptoms of iron deficiency vary depending on several factors, including age, anaemia severity, and general health. These includes:

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- Tiredness or weakness
- Pale or yellowish skin
- Dizziness
- Increased thirst
- Sweating
- Weak and rapid pulse, rapid breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Lower leg cramps
- Heart-related symptoms (abnormal heart rhythms, heart murmur, enlarged heart, heart failure)



## Prevention and treatment

If you think you're showing signs or symptoms of iron deficiency talk to your healthcare provider. If it is confirmed that you have iron deficiency, then is usually treated with supplements in the form of injections or pills and a diet rich in Iron. In severe cases, blood transfusion is required to treat iron deficiency anaemia.

## Dietary tips:

A person with iron deficiency anaemia requires 150–200 mg of iron every day, which amounts to 2–5 mg per kilo. Since iron supplements don't absorb well at high doses, dosage recommendations vary. Choosing a suitable dose of extra iron should be discussed with a doctor.

Here are examples of foods rich in iron:

- Red meat, and poultry
- Seafood
- Beans
- Dark green leafy vegetables, such as spinach
- Dried fruit, such as raisins and apricots
- Iron-fortified cereals, bread and pasta
- Nuts and seeds



**Boost your body's iron absorption by drinking citrus juice or eating other vitamin C-rich foods when eating high-iron foods. Orange juice, for example, contains vitamin C, which helps your body absorb iron.**