

ANEMIA DURING PREGNANCY

Anemia is a reduction in the number of red blood cells in the bloodstream. Because red blood cells carry oxygen throughout the body, this reduction decreases the efficiency of the body's processes and causes a number of symptoms, including dizziness, shortness of breath, general weakness, paleness (of the skin, fingernail beds, and mucous membranes), fatigue, loss of appetite, heart palpitations, and gastrointestinal disturbances including constipation and abdominal pain. In most cases, a healthy diet with appropriate supplementation will prevent and rectify nutritional deficiencies.

You should notice an improvement in your symptoms after 1-2 weeks of adding more iron rich food and/or supplements to your diet.

Dietary recommendations:

- Try to eat iron-rich foods daily. Some examples are: dark green leafy vegetables, sunflower and pumpkin seeds, unsulphured dried fruits (raisins, prunes, figs, apricots, cherries), beets, beans, dark turkey meat, and eggs.
- Seaweeds are very rich iron sources. You can crumble a dried piece or two into a soup or stew for an extra boost.
- Eat foods high in Vitamin C, which assists in the absorption of iron. (250 to 500 mg of C with each meal, not to exceed 2000 mg daily)
- Dairy products may inhibit iron absorption, so have iron-rich foods and dairy at different times.
- Regular exercise increases the body's demand for oxygen. This causes a response in the body that allows iron to be absorbed more easily, as iron occurs in the red blood cells as part of the oxygen carrying capacity.
- Cook in cast iron-pots if available to increase the iron content of your food.

Herbal supplementation:

Nettles is a vital ingredient in pregnancy tea in part because it is so rich in iron. It also strengthens the blood vessels, the kidneys, and the adrenal glands. Add more nettles to your daily pregnancy tea to boost iron.

Liquid Iron is a dietary supplement that is easy to take and assimilate. I can sell you a bottle for \$10, if we decide you might benefit from supplementation.

Floradix Iron and Herbs is another natural supplement available at most health food stores for around \$20. Floradix is also easily assimilated.