

# Wellness

## REVIEW

### The Strength of Iron

#### Is Iron on Your Side?

Iron is essential for maintaining good energy levels and optimal health. It is arguably one of the most important minerals, particularly as it is involved in carrying oxygen to every cell in your body. Haemoglobin is the body's oxygen-carrying protein and where you find approximately two-thirds of your iron; therefore, without adequate iron the transportation of oxygen is affected. As iron is involved in maintaining healthy immunity, it's no wonder you don't feel great when your levels are low!

#### Symptoms of Low Iron

The following symptoms could be signs of low iron levels:

- Fatigue and lethargy;
- Frequent colds and flus;
- Paleness inside the mouth and lower eyelid;
- Fuzzy head, not thinking clearly;
- Low body temperature;
- Dizziness; and/or
- Restless legs or leg cramps at night.

#### Reasons for Low Iron

Iron deficiency can be mild, however when it is very low you can become 'anaemic'. Low iron can be a result of not obtaining enough from your diet. Factors that may cause low iron include tea and coffee intake, blood loss, pregnancy or poor absorption as a result of underlying gut problems.

Certain populations have been identified as potentially more at risk of low iron levels, including teenagers, the elderly, pregnant women, vegetarians and vegans.

#### Test – Don't Guess

If you suspect you may be low in iron, it is important to speak to your healthcare Practitioner or Doctor about a simple blood test to assess your iron levels, especially if you are at increased risk. Testing can ensure your safety, as symptoms of iron excess may be similar to signs of iron deficiency and in some circumstances, high iron intake can be detrimental.

#### Dietary Sources of Iron

Include plenty of iron-rich foods in your diet to maintain a healthy intake. Animal foods provide a good source of iron, including beef, lamb, kangaroo, turkey, chicken, fish, oysters, liver and sardines. The redder the meat, the higher the iron content.

Plant-sources of iron include molasses, shiitake mushrooms, dark green leafy vegetables and lentils. Vegetarian sources of iron may not be as well-absorbed as animal sources.

Talk to your Practitioner today about taking a high potency iron supplement. If you are vegan or vegetarian, your Practitioner can provide vegan-friendly options.

#### Iron Needs a Little Help from its Friends

Iron works best in your body with the help of other nutrients:

- **B vitamins:** Vitamins B6, B12 and folate are involved in iron transportation and red blood cell production. Taking an essential B vitamin can help you build healthy cells and move energising oxygen around your body.
- **5-MTHF:** Known as 5-methyltetrahydrofolate – the activated form of folate. It is the same form made by your body and is readily utilised.
- **Vitamin C:** It has long been known that vitamin C increases the absorption of iron; therefore when taking iron, ideally pair it with vitamin C.

#### Forms of Iron Matter

Side-effects, such as constipation, are commonly complained about with certain forms of iron. Therefore it is important to choose a highly-absorbable form of iron to minimise the chance of gut symptoms. Ask your Practitioner for Meta Fe® (Iron bisglycinate), a gut-friendly, vegan form of iron that is a highly-absorbable form of iron, therefore reduces the chance of constipation occurring.

Your Practitioner can recommend a suitable iron formula with all the necessary nutrients needed to restore your energy levels and maintain healthy immunity.



**If you think you may be low in iron, talk to your Practitioner today.**