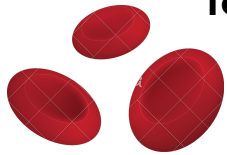


# Iron Deficiency

Iron is an essential micronutrient

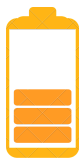
for:



Red blood cell production



Immune function



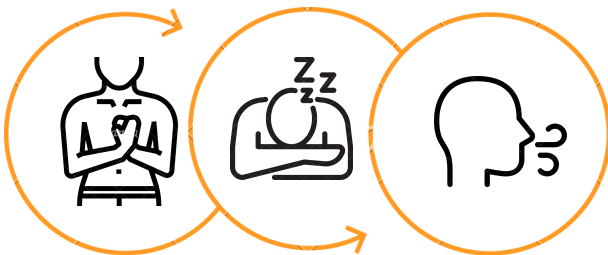
Energy level maintenance



Proper brain function

Iron deficiency affects **maternal and child health**. It is especially important for women to maintain a **healthy iron intake** throughout their reproductive life cycle.

Iron deficiency may look like:



Abnormal heartbeat

Fatigue

Shortness of breath

**Women and children** are the most susceptible to iron deficiency due to:



**For premenopausal women:**  
menstruation

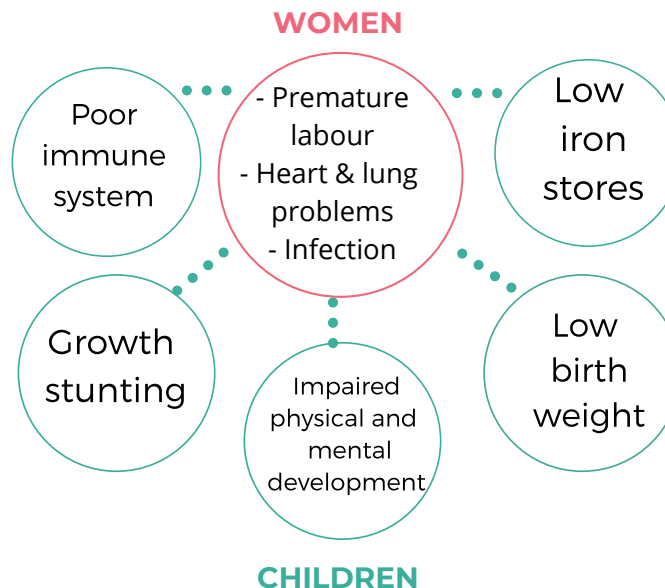


**For pregnant women:**  
transfer of iron to the placenta and the fetus in the 2nd/3rd trimester



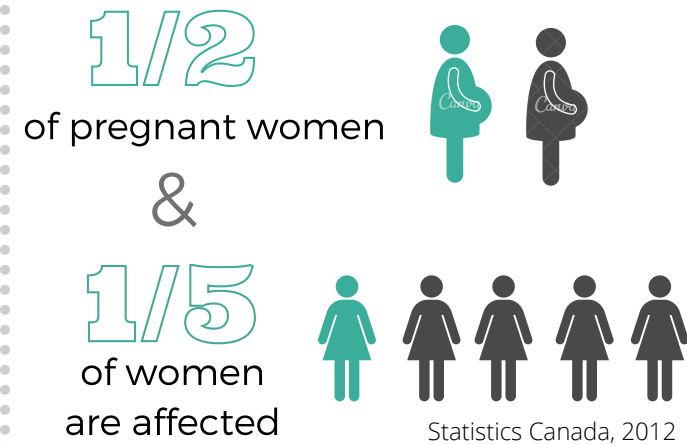
**For mothers:** lactation  
**For children:** rapid growth spurts

The consequences of iron deficiency are **intergenerational**. Maternal nutrition affects child health directly.



**Iron deficiency in Canada is more common than you think!**

Did you know...



↓ Iron  
=  
↓ Red blood cells  
=  
↓ Oxygen to your tissues

Over time, this is defined as iron-deficiency anemia.

Iron deficiency is **preventable** and **treatable** by increasing iron intake through our diet.

Iron supplements can help treat iron deficiency, however, a **nutritional diet** is most important!

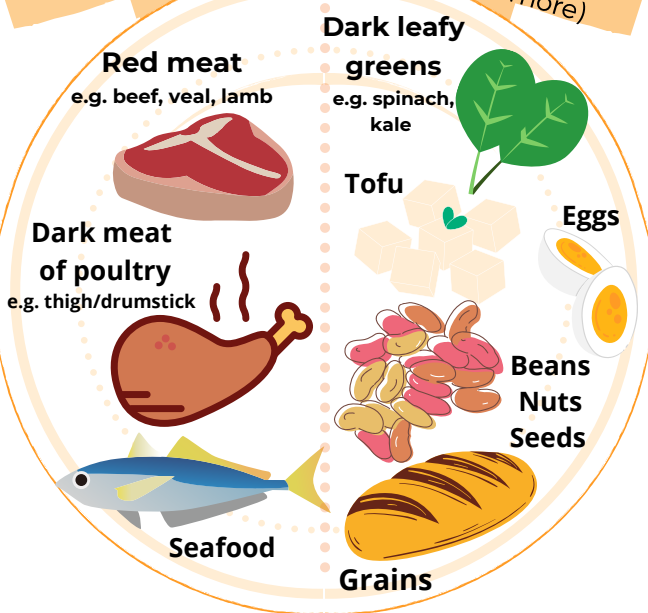
## Eat More Iron-Rich Foods!

### Haem iron

Easy for your body to absorb

### Non-haem iron

Harder to absorb  
(You need more)



### Enhancers

good to combine with meals

#### Vitamin C

e.g. citrus juice, peppers, tomatos

#### Acidic food

e.g. fermented food (kimchi, kefir, kombucha), vinegar, wine

### Inhibitors

consume separate from meals



Tea and coffee



Dairy products

## Quick Tips to Get More Iron Today!

### For premenopausal women:

#### Diet Diversification

Eat more iron-rich foods to maintain good health



### For pregnant women:

#### Iron Supplements with Folate, B Vitamins

Take prenatal or multi-vitamins to prevent and treat iron deficiency



### For mothers:

#### Breastfeeding & Iron-Fortified Foods

e.g. iron-fortified baby formula, cereals, grains

Breastfeed for the first 6 months to provide your baby with a rich source of iron

If this is not possible, iron-fortified baby formula is appropriate



Please consult with your family physician to ensure most appropriate treatment.

## Want to Learn More?



Scan this QR code or go to <https://linktr.ee/hmb443iron> to access **iron-rich recipes** and **free resources**.



Pregnant? Have a newborn? You might be eligible for **free supplements**.

Contact your family physician to apply.

Details in QR code.

### Iron-rich recipe example from Tasty Vegan Chickpea Sweet Potato Stew

(serves 4)



1. In large pot, heat **2 tbsp coconut oil** over medium heat. Once the oil begins to shimmer, add **1 small diced onion** and cook for 4-5 minutes, or until the onion is semi-translucent.
2. Add **3 cloves minced garlic** and **1 tsp ginger**, and cook for 2-3 more minutes, until fragrant. Then add **1 tbsp sweet paprika**, **½ tsp cumin**, **¼ tsp dried coriander**, and **⅛ tsp cayenne** and cook for 2 more minutes, until fragrant.
3. Add the **1 can chickpeas** (15oz, drained and rinsed), **2 cups sweet potatoes** (peeled and diced), **1 can crushed tomatoes** (15oz), and **3 cups vegetable broth**, and bring to a boil.
4. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes are tender.
5. Add **5 oz spinach** and stir until wilted. Enjoy!

HMB433 - University of Toronto  
Cecilia H, Diana P, Jessica R, Jennifer D