

## Anaemia in Women - Prevention, Symptoms, Test and Treatment

Anaemia is a prevalent health concern that affects women more, particularly during pregnancy, menstruation, and menopause. This condition is characterized by a deficiency of red blood cells or hemoglobin an essential component for transporting oxygen throughout the body. Women, due to physiological factors are more susceptible to anaemia. Early detection and intervention can significantly improve outcomes and quality of life for those affected by Anaemia.

**Symptoms of Anaemia include** any one or multiple of the following:

- Tiredness, weakness.
- Shortness of breath.
- Pale or yellowish skin, more obvious on white skin
- Irregular heartbeat.
- Dizziness or light-headedness.
- Chest pain.
- Headaches

### **Consequences of Anaemia:**

Mild iron deficiency Anaemia usually doesn't cause complications. However, left untreated, iron deficiency Anaemia can become severe and lead to health problems, including heart problems and pregnancy.

### **Causes of Anaemia:**

- **Iron deficiency Anaemia:** Too little iron in the body causes this most common type of Anaemia. Bone marrow needs iron to make hemoglobin. Without this, the body cannot make enough hemoglobin for red blood cells.
- **Vitamin deficiency Anaemia:** Besides iron, the body needs folate and vitamin B-12 to make enough healthy red blood cells. A diet deficient in these nutrients causes Anaemia.
- **Bone marrow diseases** such as leukemia and myelofibrosis can affect how the bone marrow makes blood, leading to Anaemia which can be mild or life-threatening.
- **Anaemia of inflammation:** Diseases that cause ongoing inflammation can keep the body from making enough red blood cells. Examples are

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cancer, HIV/AIDS, rheumatoid arthritis, kidney disease, and Crohn's disease.

- **Hemolytic Anaemia.** These are caused by red blood cells being destroyed faster than bone marrow can replace them. Certain blood diseases increase how fast red blood cells are destroyed.
- **Inherited Anaemia:** Some types of hemolytic Anaemia can be passed through families, such as sickle cell Anaemia.

## Who is at risk?

- **Those with heavy menstrual periods,** this causes the loss of red blood cells.
- **Pregnant women** who don't take multivitamins with folic acid and iron are at an increased risk of Anaemia.
- **People who** have a diet deficient in certain vitamins, minerals, iron, vitamin B-12, and folate.
- **People with chronic conditions** such as cancer, kidney failure, diabetes, etc.
- **People with** small intestinal conditions that affects the absorption of nutrients.
- **People over** age 65 are at increased risk of Anaemia.

## How to diagnose Anaemia?

Your healthcare provider is likely to ask you about your medical and family history, do a physical exam, and order blood tests. Tests might include:

- **Complete blood count (CBC)** is used to count the number of blood cells in a sample of blood. For Anaemia, the test measures the amount of red blood cells in the blood, called hematocrit, and the level of hemoglobin in the blood.
- **A test to show the size and shape of the red blood cells.** This looks at the size, shape, and color of the red blood cells.

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## Treatment for Anaemia:

- Healthcare providers may recommend changing your diet or taking supplements if you have iron deficiency Anaemia or pernicious Anaemia.
- If you have Anaemia because you have a chronic disease, your doctor will treat the underlying condition. They may prescribe medication to boost red blood cell production.

## Prevention of Anaemia:

- **Changes in diet** can help reduce Anaemia in some cases, including:
  - Eating foods that are rich in iron, folate, vitamin B12, vitamin A and other nutrients,
  - Eating a healthy diet with a variety of foods, especially red vegetables or fruits and green leafy items.
  - Taking supplements recommended by your doctor
- **Practicing good hygiene** to prevent infections
- **Managing chronic** diseases like obesity and digestive problems
- **Waiting at least 24** months between pregnancies by birth control
- **Iron supplements or hormonal contraceptives** for heavy menstrual bleeding as per doctor's recommendation.

The duration and severity of Anaemia depend on the underlying causes. Seeking timely medical attention, adopting a healthy lifestyle, and addressing the root causes are essential steps in managing Anaemia.

## To know more:

- [Why women are more likely to develop Anaemia?](#)

## Your Health, Your Responsibility