

Oral Iron Supplements

What it does:

- Iron is a mineral your body needs to make red blood cells which help carry oxygen to your body.
- Low levels of iron can cause tiredness, weakness, shortness of breath and other health problems.

How it works:

- Oral iron tablets replace the iron your body is missing to help make more healthy red blood cells.
- It helps to increase your hemoglobin and your body's iron stores.
- You don't have to have anemia (low hemoglobin) to benefit from iron when your levels are low.
- It may take several weeks before you start to feel better. It will take 3-6 months for the iron levels to return to normal.
- Many foods, especially meat, fish and poultry, contain iron. However, it is difficult for some people to get enough iron from diet alone.

How to take it:

- Take this medication on an empty stomach (at bedtime).
- If you experience upset stomach, you may take with a small amount of food.
- If taking iron with antacids, high-calcium foods, or other supplements, make sure to space it at least 2 hours before or 4 hours after taking the iron dose.

- Take this medicine exactly as your doctor tells you, even if you feel well.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose. Take your next dose at the usual time.

Possible side effects:

- Nausea, upset stomach
- Constipation, diarrhea, or dark stools (this is expected)