

If you have been told you have iron deficiency anemia you are not alone!

About one in four people in the world have anemia, and about one in eight people have iron deficiency anemia (sometimes called "IDA").

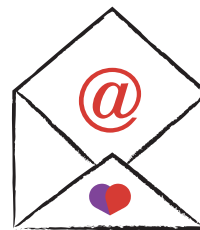


The Infusion Access Foundation is 501(c)3 non-profit public charity that unites a community of patients to protect access to treatments that you get at a clinic, such as infusions and injections.

We support each other across all diseases and advocate with one voice that reaches policy makers.

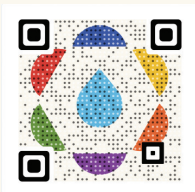
**DROP US A LINE!**

We'd love to hear from you!



[info@patientaccess.org](mailto:info@patientaccess.org)

# IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA



Want to learn more about iron infusions?

Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera to learn more about what to expect during your infusion appointment.

This educational material was developed in partnership with Pharmacosmos Therapeutics Inc.

Pasricha SR, Tye-Din J, Muckenthaler MJ, Swinkels DW. Iron deficiency. Lancet. 2021;397(10270):233-248.

Paul P, Maiti D, Adhikary T. Iron deficiency anemia-An updated overview. International Journal of Research in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. 2021;6(4):28-33.

Warner MJ, Kamran MT. Iron Deficiency Anemia. In. NCBI Bookshelf StatPearls. [online]. StatPearls Publishing; 2021.



# WHAT IS IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA?

Iron is a mineral your body uses to make new red blood cells. When your body doesn't have enough healthy red blood cells to carry oxygen around inside your body, this is called anemia. There are different types of anemia with different causes.

*Iron deficiency anemia is the most common type of anemia.*

## CAUSES

Common causes include:

- Not having enough iron in your diet
- Health conditions or medications that make it hard for your body to absorb iron from food or supplements
- Blood loss (menstrual periods, major surgery, stomach ulcers)
- Inflammatory conditions (Crohn's disease, rheumatoid arthritis)
- An increase in the body's need for iron (pregnancy)
- Chronic kidney disease

## SYMPTOMS

IDA does not always have symptoms, but they can range from mild to severe. Signs and symptoms include:

- Low energy
- Weakness
- Pale skin
- Fast heartbeat
- Dizziness/ lightheadedness
- Cold hands and feet
- Restless legs
- Brittle fingernails
- Craving to chew ice
- Thinning hair

## DIAGNOSIS

Your healthcare provider may check for IDA using a group of blood tests called an "iron panel," which includes:

- *Hemoglobin* – part of red blood cells that carries oxygen
- *Ferritin* – stores iron in the body
- *Serum iron* - iron in the liquid part of blood.
- *Transferrin* - carries iron around the body

## HOW IS IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA TREATED?

Treatment for IDA depends on the cause and severity, as well as how quickly it needs to be corrected.

### ORAL IRON SUPPLEMENTS

Oral iron supplements (pills or liquids) can help when dietary iron is not enough. Oral iron may take a few months to help, or it may not work well for some people. Reasons for this include:

- Side effects that are hard to tolerate like nausea or diarrhea
- The body is not able to absorb iron
- Iron and/or red blood cell levels need to be improved quickly

### INTRAVENOUS (IV) IRON

When oral iron supplements are not tolerated or effective, your healthcare provider may recommend iron infusions. "Infusion" means the medication is given through a tiny tube into a vein. Some types of IV iron are given in one infusion, and other types may be split up into multiple infusions and given over several weeks.

*Iron infusions are given by a healthcare provider in a clinical setting, such as an infusion center.*

## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO WORK?

Most people will have blood work ordered a few weeks after their last iron infusion and will see iron and red blood cell levels starting to improve. As always, talk to your healthcare provider if you notice any new or worsening symptoms.

# INFUSION THERAPY FOR IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA

If you have never had an infusion, it may seem overwhelming or scary. The following information is designed to answer common questions and ease your mind as you prepare for your infusion.



## WHAT IS IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA?

When your body doesn't have enough healthy red blood cells, this is called anemia. When your body doesn't have enough iron available to make healthy red blood cells, this is called iron deficiency anemia.

## WHAT IS AN INFUSION?

During an infusion, medication is given directly into the bloodstream through a small tube called an "IV" which is placed in a vein in your arm or hand.

## WHY DO I NEED AN INFUSION?

Healthcare providers recommend intravenous (IV) iron infusions when oral iron is not working or tolerated. Iron infusions might also be recommended if your iron levels are very low and/or need to be built up quickly.

## ARE INFUSIONS PAINFUL OR UNCOMFORTABLE?

Getting an infusion requires placing an IV which can cause brief discomfort, but after a moment, this will improve, and the IV should not be painful during your infusion. It is important to tell your nurse right away if your IV site hurts or if you have any new symptoms during your infusion so they can assess the situation.

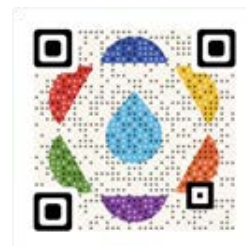
## WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT DURING MY VISIT?

Your appointment length will depend on which type of IV iron you were prescribed; between one and two hours is average. Your nurse will check your vital signs and monitor you during your infusion and for 30 minutes afterward to make sure you feel well before you go home. Some types of IV iron are given in a single infusion, while others require multiple visits.

## WHEN WILL I START FEELING BETTER?

Some people notice an improvement in certain symptoms, such as fatigue, in about 2-3 weeks. It usually takes about a month for the body to use the iron to build new red blood cells, so symptoms should continue to improve during that time.

*Together for Treatment.*



[www.patientaccess.org](http://www.patientaccess.org)

This educational material was developed in partnership with Pharmacosmos Therapeutics Inc. This guide covers the basics of infusions for iron deficiency anemia. It is intended for educational purposes only, and does not replace medical advice from a healthcare provider. Always reach out to your healthcare team with any questions you may have about your disease, treatment plan, or any other concerns.

# AFTER YOUR IRON INFUSION

Today you received an iron infusion to treat iron deficiency anemia. Your body needs iron to make healthy red blood cells to carry oxygen to all of your muscles, tissues, and organs.



## After your infusion, you may resume your normal activities.

Unless your healthcare provider tells you otherwise, you should be able to drive yourself home, take all of your regular medications, and continue on with your usual daily routine.

## Bruising and slight discomfort at the IV site is common and should go away in a few days.

You may use a cold compress for comfort today if needed. After that, warmth (like a heating pad) can help heal bruising at the site. If you notice changes such as pain, redness, drainage, numbness or tingling or any other concerning symptoms near your IV site, contact your healthcare provider.

## Most people tolerate iron infusions well, but side effects are possible.

Side effects are generally mild and resolve on their own within a few days. If you do experience side effects, that does not mean you are allergic to iron or that you can't have another iron infusion in the future.

Side effects may include:

- Nausea, or feeling sick to your stomach
- Metallic taste in your mouth
- "Flu-like symptoms" such as muscle or joint aches, headache, or mild fever, usually starting about one or two days after your infusion.

## Get medical attention right away if you experience new or concerning symptoms such as:

- Itching, swelling, rash, or hives
- Swelling of the hands, face or mouth
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Trouble breathing
- Wheezing (noisy breathing that may sound musical or like whistling)

*\*This is not a complete list of possible symptoms. Call your medical provider for any symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.*



## Remember to complete any follow-up testing if needed.

Your healthcare provider may order bloodwork to be completed after your iron infusion(s). The timing of this bloodwork is important and depends on what type of iron you received, so be sure to follow their instructions. If you're not sure if you need follow-up bloodwork, call your healthcare provider.



*Together for Treatment.*



[www.patientaccess.org](http://www.patientaccess.org)

*This educational material was developed in partnership with Pharmacosmos Therapeutics Inc. This guide covers the basics of infusions for iron deficiency anemia. It is intended for educational purposes only, and does not replace medical advice from a healthcare provider. Always reach out to your healthcare team with any questions you may have about your disease, treatment plan, or any other concerns.*





A REFERRAL FOR IRON  
INFUSIONS **HAS BEEN SENT TO:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*(Facility Name)*

**NEXT STEPS:**

 Call the infusion center at \_\_\_\_\_  
to schedule your appointment.

 The infusion center will call you.  
*The infusion center may need some information from you  
before they can schedule your appointment. If you miss their call,  
call back as soon as possible to avoid delays.*

**NOTES:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



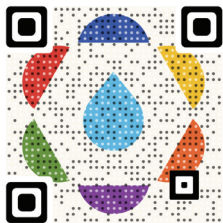
**Infusion Access  
Foundation**

*Developed in partnership with Pharmacosmos Therapeutics Inc.*

## The Infusion Access Foundation (IAF)

is a community of patients united to protect access to treatments that you get at a clinic, such as infusions and injections. We support each other

across all diseases and advocate with one voice that reaches policy makers.



### Want to learn more about iron infusions?

While you wait for your appointment, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera to learn more about iron deficiency anemia and what to expect during your infusion appointment.



# IAF

*Together for Treatment.*