

## Iron Deficiency

Vegetarians have an increased risk of anaemia, because vegetable sources of iron are not so well absorbed.

Tannin from tea, and cereals and flours that are cooked quickly (such as chapatti) stop iron being absorbed, so making anaemia more likely.



People who are anaemic should not drink tea at meals. Instead drink pure fruit juice, squash, lassi, milk or water.

If you eat meat, make sure you eat it at least twice a week. Red meat such as lamb or beef contains more iron than white meats such as chicken or fish. Aim to eat plant sources of iron every day. Try:

- Pulses, split peas and dahl
- Fortified breakfast cereals
- Sunflower and pumpkin seeds
- Dried figs, apricots or raisins
- Wholegrain bread
- Eggs

Iron is absorbed better if eaten at the same time as foods containing Vitamin C. Try:

- Citrus fruit e.g. oranges, satsumas, limes
- Fruit such as kiwi, berries, papaya and mango
- Many brands of squash are fortified with vitamin C e.g. blackcurrant, orange
- Raw or lightly cooked tomato
- Freshly cooked dark green vegetables

If you are found to have iron deficiency anaemia, your doctor will probably prescribe an iron supplement to get the level of iron in your blood up quickly. This can cause constipation so be sure to eat lots of vegetables and drink plenty of water when you take these supplements

