

Iron Deficiency during Pregnancy

- **If your doctor or nurse tells you to take iron pills consider: No prescription necessary, all these brands are available over the counter.**
 - Ferrous Fumarate 300mg
 - Euro Fer 300mg
 - Ferrous Gluconate 300mg
 - Feramax 150mg x2 tablets to equal (300mg)
- Try to take the pills on an empty stomach about 1 hour before or 2 hours after meals. But you may need to take iron with food to avoid an upset stomach.
- **Do not take** calcium products (antacids, drink milk or caffeine drinks) at the same time or within 2 hours of the time that you take your iron. They can prevent your body from absorbing the iron.
- **Take Vitamin C** (from food or supplements) with your iron to help the iron absorb. Try taking iron pills with a glass of orange juice, lemon water or food high in vitamin C.



- Iron pills may cause dark GREEN stool and stomach problems, such as heartburn, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, and cramps. Be sure to drink plenty of water and include fruits, vegetables, and plenty of fibre in your diet each day.



“Metamucil is an example of a Vit C fibre supplement usually recommended (sold over the counter at drug stores).”

- If you have tried increasing water intake (2 Liters daily), walking daily, fibrous fruits, vegetables AND Metamucil.
- Laxatives such as Senna and Restor-a-lax are available over the counter if needed.

- **Eat foods rich in iron.**

- *Examples include red meat, shellfish, poultry, eggs, beans, raisins, whole-grain bread, and leafy green vegetables.*



- Do not stop taking iron pills without talking to your doctor or nurse first. Even after you start to feel better, it will take several months for your body to build up a store of iron. Call your family doctor or nurse call line if you think you are having a problem with your iron pills. If you miss a pill, do not take a double dose of iron.
- Talk to your doctor about any cravings for non-food items such as dirt, ashes, clay, or chalk. These cravings can be a sign of iron deficiency anemia.