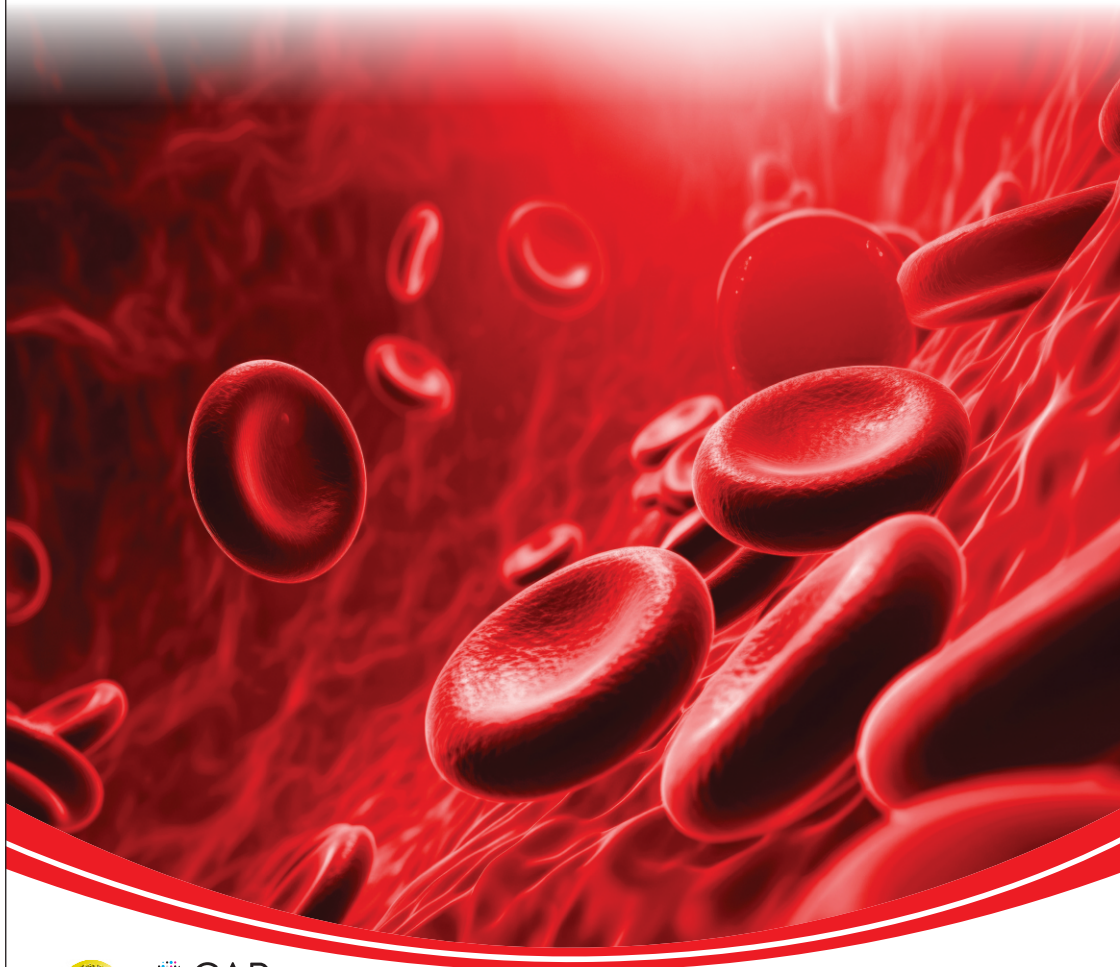


Management of Iron Deficiency Anaemia in Pregnancy

Information for Patients/Guardians



What is Iron Deficiency Anaemia?

Iron deficiency anaemia occurs when your body doesn't have enough iron to produce sufficient red blood cells, which are needed for carrying oxygen throughout your body. During pregnancy, blood volume increases, meaning your body requires more iron to support both you and your baby, making you more susceptible to anaemia.

Why is it Important to Manage Iron Deficiency Anaemia During Pregnancy?

Managing iron deficiency anaemia during pregnancy is crucial for both mother and baby's health due to the following reasons:

- Low iron levels can lead to low birth weight and an increased risk of premature delivery.
- Iron deficiency can cause fatigue, shortness of breath, dizziness, headaches, and an increased risk of infections.
- Adequate iron levels help manage blood loss during childbirth, reducing complications during pregnancy.

What are the Symptoms of Iron Deficiency Anaemia?

Extreme tiredness, Pale skin, Breathlessness, Dizziness, Rapid heartbeat, Headaches, Brittle nails, and Hair loss.

How to Prevent Iron Deficiency Anaemia During Pregnancy

- **Eat iron-rich foods:** Include the following in your diet: lean red meat (beef, lamb), poultry (chicken, turkey), fish, dark leafy green vegetables (spinach, kale), legumes (beans, lentils), iron-fortified cereals, dried fruits (raisins, apricots).
- **Enhance iron absorption with Vitamin C:** Vitamin C helps your body absorb iron better. Pair iron-rich foods with sources of Vitamin C such as citrus fruits, tomatoes, and peppers.
- **Take prenatal vitamins:** Most prenatal vitamins contain iron, which supports healthy iron levels during pregnancy.

What to Do If you are Diagnosed with Iron Deficiency Anaemia?

- Follow your doctor's instructions regarding iron supplements.
- Take iron supplements as directed, usually with a glass of water or orange juice to enhance absorption.
- If iron supplements cause stomach discomfort, consult your doctor for alternative options.
- Avoid taking calcium supplements at the same time as iron, as calcium can interfere with iron absorption.
- Discuss other options for iron replacement if oral supplements are intolerable or if your haemoglobin levels do not improve.

When to See your Doctor?

- If you experience any symptoms of iron deficiency anaemia.
- If you have concerns about your diet during pregnancy.
- If you are taking medications that may affect iron absorption.

Always consult your healthcare provider for personalised advice regarding your health and pregnancy.

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