



Iron supplements

Consumer medicine information

To give you energy for daily life, you need iron. Some iron tablets and tonics contain very small amounts of iron and are generally not suitable when an iron supplement is required. Anaemia can develop if iron levels fall. Take iron tablets as prescribed by your doctor.

Recommended iron supplements to treat low iron levels, with or without anaemia, are listed below.

Iron Supplements

Trade name	Formulation	Elemental iron content
Fefol®	Ferrous sulphate 270mg + folic acid 300microg Controlled release capsules	87.4mg
Ferro-F-tab®	Ferrous fumarate 310mg + folic acid 350microg Film coated tablets	100mg
Ferro-tab®	Ferrous fumarate 200mg Film coated tablets	65.7mg
Ferrograd C®	Ferrous sulfate 325mg + Vitamin C 500mg Controlled release tablets	105mg
Ferro-Gradumet®	Ferrous sulfate 325mg Controlled release tablets	105mg
Ferro-liquid®	Ferrous sulfate 30mg/mL Oral liquid	6mg/mL
FGF®	Ferrous sulfate 250mg + folic acid 300microg Controlled release tablets	80mg
Maltofer®	Iron polymaltose 370mg Film coated tablets	100mg
Maltofer Oral liquid®	Iron polymaltose 37mg/mL	10mg/mL

These products are available from your local pharmacy without a prescription. Please consult your doctor regarding the duration of your iron therapy.

How to take iron supplements to ensure maximum absorption and minimum side effects (e.g. stomach upset or teeth discoloration)

- swallow capsules or tablets whole, do not crush or chew them.
- do NOT take with tea, coffee, chocolate / cocoa drinks or red wine.
- do NOT take within two to three hours of antacids, calcium tablets, (levo) thyroxine, doxycycline or minocycline.

Additionally:

Ferro-Gradumet®, Ferrograd C®, FGF®, Fefol®, Ferro-f-tab®, Ferro-tab®, Ferro-liquid® should be taken:

- on an empty stomach (one hour before or two hours after a meal).
- with a glass of water or fruit juice.

Maltofer® tablets should be taken:

- during or immediately after a meal.
- with a glass of water.

Maltofer® syrup:

- can be mixed with fruit and vegetable juices.

Side effects

- include nausea, upset stomach, stomach cramps, constipation and diarrhoea.
- often improve or disappear as your body adjusts to the iron supplement.
- can make your stool (faeces) turn black, however this is normal.

How to ease side effects

- If taking more than one iron supplement daily, spread capsules or tablets throughout the day.
- Increase daily fluid and dietary fibre to ease constipation.
- Take your capsules or tablets with or shortly after food if you experience stomach upset.
- A different type of iron may help.
- If iron tablets cannot be tolerated, iron syrup may be suitable and can be diluted with water or fruit juice and sipped through a straw to avoid teeth discoloration.

Iron in pregnancy and breastfeeding

Oral iron supplementations are safe to use during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Where can I get more information?

Contact your doctor or the Obstetric Medicines Information Service at King Edward Memorial Hospital on (08) 6458 2723 if you have any questions about medicines in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Useful links

- mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets-parent/
- Lactmed - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501922/>



WARNING KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

Iron tablets should be kept out of reach of children. A small amount of iron can be poisonous, even fatal in infants and young children. If a child accidentally takes iron tablets call the Poisons Information Centre immediately on 13 11 26



Women and Newborn Health Service

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