

TREATMENT OF IRON DEFICIENCY

IRON IN THE BODY

Iron is an important mineral (element), and is found in all the cells of the body. The human body contains an average of 3.5 g of iron, which is equivalent to a three-inch nail. The iron found in the body is in the form of haemoglobin (Hb), stored iron, tissue iron (in the muscles) and serum iron (in the bloodstream).

THE MAJOR FUNCTIONS OF IRON

Iron performs many different functions in the body. The most important of these is transporting oxygen. This is why three-quarters of the iron is found in haemoglobin, which transports oxygen from the lungs to all the tissues of the body. The tissue iron is responsible for the storage of the oxygen in the cells of the skeleton and heart muscle. Iron is essential for the production of red blood cells.

THE NEED FOR IRON

The need for iron can vary, as can the loss of iron. Consequently, we must adapt our iron intake according to our needs. Women after menopause and men require a daily iron intake of about 10 mg. Growing teenagers and women in their fertile period should take 10-20 mg per day. Both men and women engaged in active sports require more iron. The need of pregnant women for iron gradually increases, reaching its peak level beginning in the 20th week of pregnancy. Certain intestinal diseases and absorption disorders also increase the need for iron.

IRON DEFICIENCY

In the first stage of iron deficiency, the body's iron reserves are used for the production of red blood cells. The body thus takes from its iron reserves to maintain an optimum haemoglobin level. As a result, the Hb value does not always show that the iron reserves are reduced or depleted. An iron deficiency can also result in symptoms such as fatigue, even though the Hb values are normal. When the Hb value also decreases, the iron reserves are depleted or empty, and the iron deficiency has developed into iron deficiency anaemia.

SYMPTOMS OF IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA

Iron deficiency anaemia can result in fatigue and weakness, shortness of breath even after minor exertions, impaired ability to concentrate, increased susceptibility to stress, and heart palpitations. It can be necessary to treat iron deficiency, as well, in order to prevent it from developing into iron deficiency anaemia.

IRON DEFICIENCY IN CONJUNCTION WITH PREGNANCY

During pregnancy, the need for iron is much greater than what can be supplied through food intake. After the 20th week of pregnancy, the need for iron reaches its maximum. In order to prevent iron deficiency anaemia in conjunction with pregnancy and after delivery, taking iron supplements is recommended beginning with the 20th week of pregnancy.

CAUSES OF IRON DEFICIENCY

Iron deficiency may be caused by factors that include heavy menstruation, pregnancy, long periods of physical exertion, donating blood, accelerated growth during the teen years, bleeding, and low intake of dietary iron.

DIETARY IRON

Meat contains bound iron, and is the best source of iron. The darker the meat, the more bound iron it contains. Iron in vegetables (non-bound iron), such as spinach and parsley, is much harder for the body to utilise. Absorption of iron from vegetables can be improved significantly through the simultaneous intake of meat and vitamin C.

NIFEREX® 100 MG/CAPSULES

Niferex is a medication for the treatment of iron deficiency and iron deficiency anaemia. Vitamin C is added to the active substance, ferroglycine sulphate, in order to increase the absorption of iron. As the duodenum is the area where iron is absorbed, the iron granulate in the Niferex® capsules is treated with a gastric juice-resistant coating, so that the iron is not released until it reaches the duodenum. The sole function of the capsule is to keep the granulate intact.

Side affects such as diarrhoea, constipation, heartburn, vomiting or other gastric symptoms may occur in very rare cases (fewer than 1 in 10,000 users). Skin rashes, too, may appear in very rare cases. Dark-coloured stool may result.

Dosing should be in accordance with the instructions of the medical personnel, or according to the insert in the package.

The most common dose is one capsule daily together with water. It is also possible to empty the content of the capsule with a spoon and swallow it with generous amounts of water, without chewing on the granulate. Gelatine is found only in the shell of the capsule. The iron granulate contains no substances from animals. Children below the age of six years should not ingest Niferex.

Avoid taking iron together with foods that lessen the absorption of iron, such as milk, coffee, cereal, bran and coarsely-ground grain.

The treatment should continue until normal Hb values have been achieved, and should continue some time after this in order to replenish the iron reserves.

There is no danger in taking normal doses of Niferex without having an iron deficiency, as the body only absorbs iron when a deficiency exists. Any iron that the body does not need is eliminated through the bowels.

EROL AB

Telephone +46 (0)411 – 391 85

www.erol.se