The Importance of Iron & How to Correct Anemia
by Susan Perri

Iron is an important mineral for the creation and maintenance of healthy, viable blood cells with intact membranes. Healthy and resilient cell membranes ensure that more nutrients go in and more waste gets out, in addition to protecting the cell from invasion by unfriendly microorganisms. This is efficient body energy. Vitamin B12 and folic acid are other integral nutrients. These too work to protect and restore cellular health. They act at the level of the bone marrow, where blood cells are produced and released. All of these—iron, vitamin B12, and folic acid—are necessary for the mother's good health and energy, as well as for baby's rapid development. Anemia occurs when a lack of these vital nutrients, especially iron, causes a breakdown of blood cell membranes. The resulting feeling is one of significant fatigue, lethargy, intolerance to cold temperatures, increased susceptibility to illness and dark circles beneath the eyes. Anemia is a common issue for pregnant women. Pregnant women who lack adequate amounts of these necessary nutrients quickly deplete their own reserves to sustain first the growing fetus and then themselves. The breakdown of blood cell membranes in anemia means the cells cannot do their important work of delivering oxygen throughout the body. This disrupts energy production and transport cycles, in addition to the natural means of defense from infection. Iron, vitamin B12 and folic acid are readily available in supplement form. Included here are some herbal options for boosting iron to nourish and rebuild the blood. These yield good results in correcting anemia.

Single Herbs Rich in Iron

*Yellow dock root* (Rumex crispus)
*Dandelion leaf* (Taraxacum officinale)
*Stinging nettle* (Urtica dioica)

All three of these are regarded as common “weeds” and are available in abundance throughout North America. Use in tincture form, 1 to 2 drops daily, twice daily. Yellow dock and dandelion leaf have distinct flavors that may be too strong for some people. But nettle herb makes a wonderful infusion. Long-term use of nettle infusion is deeply nourishing and is an excellent ally for women who struggle with low iron and all types of anemia.

Deep Vitality Cordial (Iron Syrup)

This is a delicious high-iron combination to prevent and correct anemia. It also benefits low iron situations that have not yet progressed to the anemic stage.

- 1/2 cup blackberries
- 1/2 cup raspberries
- 1/2 cup rosehips (fresh or dried)
- 1/2 oz. yellow dock root
- 1 oz. dandelion leaf tincture
- 1 oz. nettle tincture
- 3 cups water
- 1/2 cup blackstrap molasses
- 1/4 cup maple syrup

Boil the three cups of water, add the berries and yellow dock, and gently simmer for 20 to 30 minutes or until the liquid is reduced by half. Line a sieve with cheesecloth or muslin, and place this securely over a large glass bowl. Pour the hot berry juice from its pot through the lined sieve, catching the strained juice in the glass bowl. Put aside the hot berry mash in the cloth, and allow it to cool. Meanwhile, add the sweeteners to the hot liquid, and whisk to ensure it is well blended. When this liquid has cooled, add the tinctures and the remaining juice, which can be squeezed (wrung) from the cooled berries and yellow dock through the cloth.

Store the syrup in a clean glass bottle and refrigerate to prolong shelf life. The molasses and alcohol from the tinctures will act as natural preservatives. Take 1 tablespoon once or twice daily as needed.

Resources


www.midwiferytoday.com
Copyright of Birthkit is the property of Midwifery Today Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder’s express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.