

Chapter 1 : Iron and Your Heart Health - free article courtesy of calendrierdelascience.com

If you have a health condition that affects your heart – such as high blood pressure, diabetes, coronary artery disease, or heart failure – then it's important to be aware of another.

Feeling cold all the time, especially in the hands and feet
Numbness in the hands and feet
Pale appearance
Problems concentrating or performing at your job or in class
Frequent headaches or dizziness
When anemia becomes severe, the heart has to pump harder and faster to compensate for the decreased oxygen levels in the body. While there are different types of anemia, they all are due to the same underlying problems – insufficient red blood cells or lack of hemoglobin. Common causes of anemia include: Insufficient iron in the blood
An inherited blood condition
Lack of vitamins like B and folate
Another illness like kidney disease or cancer
Rapid blood loss due to recent surgery, heavy periods, or a bleeding ulcer

Different Types of Anemia

The five most common forms of anemia are:

- This is an inherited condition in which red blood cells are misshapen, or "sickle" shaped. The abnormal shape of the red blood cells causes them to be more fragile and less effective at delivering oxygen to the tissues. A genetic disorder that runs in families. These red blood cells are bigger than normal cells, but do not transport hemoglobin as efficiently. In this condition, red blood cells are rapidly removed from the bloodstream. Infections, medications, and diseases of the immune system can all lead to this type of anemia. Hemolytic anemia can also occur after blood transfusions.

Are You At Risk for Anemia?

A number of risk factors increase the likelihood of developing anemia, including: Up to 48 percent of people who have had heart failure are anemic. And of people hospitalized for a heart attack , 43 percent were found to have anemia. People who are anemic are at a percent greater risk of having a heart attack or needing procedures to treat heart disease as compared to those without anemia. When left untreated, anemia takes a toll on the body – particularly the heart – because oxygen levels are chronically diminished. People who already have heart disease may actually worsen their condition if they also develop anemia because decreased oxygen places added strain on the heart.

Diagnosing, Treating, and Preventing Anemia

Several simple blood tests can be used to diagnose anemia. Your doctor will perform a complete blood count CBC to determine how much hemoglobin there is in your blood. A CBC is also useful because it shows whether your other blood cell levels white blood cells and platelets are low. This information can help your doctor identify the source of your anemia. Iron, vitamin B12, and folate levels are also usually checked in the process of diagnosing anemia. If your doctor thinks that you might have an inherited form of anemia, a special test called hemoglobin electrophoresis may also be performed. This test reveals the specific types of hemoglobin in your blood and can help diagnose conditions such as sickle cell anemia and thalassemia. After anemia is diagnosed, treatment usually begins with dietary changes, vitamin supplements including iron, vitamin B12, and folate , and medications designed to increase red blood cell production. In some cases, procedures like a blood transfusion or bone marrow transplant may also be considered. Here are some tips to help decrease your risk of anemia: Eat foods rich in iron like spinach, lean red meats, beans, lentils, iron-fortified cereal and bread, liver, oysters, tofu, fish, and dried fruit. Get lots of vitamin C to help your body absorb iron more effectively. Skip coffee and tea with your meals since they can interfere with iron absorption. Finally, if you experience symptoms of anemia or have risk factors for anemia, talk to your doctor about getting regular screening tests to check your hemoglobin and red blood cell count. Early diagnosis and prevention of anemia will not only help you feel better faster, but it will also improve your heart health.

Chapter 2 : Iron Deficiency Anemia and Your Heart | Everyday Health

Oct. 25, (Washington) -- As the level of iron goes up in your bloodstream, so apparently does your risk for heart attack and stroke. A new study by Japanese researchers shows that high-level.

Iron and Your Heart Health by: Jakki Francis A ranch house, a zip lock bag and some ordinary flour Two experiments: A magnet is passed over the bag and an extraordinary thing happens - Iron particles start popping out and attaching themselves to the side of the bag, forming clusters of what looked like iron filings. The magnet is again passed over the bowl this time and the flakes literally line up and follow the magnet round the bowl. This is the first time I realized that there is so much added iron in the food that we eat and the effect it can have on our health. The arteries become so narrowed as to make the blood flow through the arteries very difficult thus placing enormous strains on the cardio-vascular system. Why do we need chelators and what are they? A few trace metals that we absorb are toxic, these include iron and lead To make use of them our bodies must form chelates key-lates out of them, and to do this requires chelating substances Chelating substances attach to desirable trace metals and allow the body to properly utilize those metals they also attach to undesirable trace metals and allow the body to remove them. Types of Chelator Many chemicals can serve as chelators. Their effects will depend on the precise nature and concentration of that chelator. There are some weak chelators present in common foods. Stronger chelators are substances used medicinally to rid the body of excess toxic metals Why is there potential for Iron Overload? Iron overload is possible because there is no normal mechanism for removing it from the body. The body is iron-efficient, it retains its iron and recycles it over and over again. Over a period of months and years this will result in the accumulation of several grams of iron. Iron and Heart Disease Risk Iron can generate free radical pathology. There is now good evidence that free radical pathology leads to changes in the blood vessels which sets the stage for atherosclerosis. Health statistics have revealed that women have a lower risk of heart disease than men, until menopause, after which the risk is the same. Pre-menopausal women have a monthly blood loss that rids the body of excess, potentially toxic iron, which may protect against heart disease. Even pre-menopausal women with high blood cholesterol levels and high levels of LDL bad cholesterol, which are considered to be strong risk factors for heart disease, have less heart disease than men. The Lead connection Lead is a toxic element that has many undesirable health effects. Evidence links excess lead with cardiovascular disease, cancer and other disorders. Researchers have found that cancer rates are higher amongst people living near heavily-traveled roads and it was suggested that this increased risk is due to the higher levels of lead in the air. This led the researchers to test the effect of a lead-removing substance - EDTA ethylene diamine tetra acetic acid ,a man-made amino acid and chelating agent - on cancer rates in people living near high-traffic roads. The man-made chelating agent EDTA can remove most toxic metals. Intravenous Chelation This therapy has been used by doctors as an effective alternative to bypass surgery for atherosclerosis since the s, giving hope that having hardening of the arteries need not lead to coronary bypass surgery, heart attack, stroke and numerous other related diseases. Doctors noted reduced pain and blood cholesterol levels as well as other favorable changes. EDTA chelation therapy has been reported to help in many conditions now thought to be related to free radical pathology: EDTA removes calcium more efficiently than magnesium which reduces the ratio. Lowering the ratio improves the flexibility of blood cells, reduces the tendency of blood to clot and reduces blood cholesterol and blood pressure. In the case of intravenous chelation, EDTA is used as the chelating agent. It is carried in a glucose formulation together with synthetic B Vitamins. It takes several hours and requires treatments. One or two oral doses of EDTA per day, over a period of months can have a long-term preventative effect. For an oral chelation supplement that has been tested and certified to lower bad cholesterol by The University of Illinois, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition: Blumer,W, et al Environmental International 3: Natures Remedies also trade worldwide on-line.

Chapter 3 : Iron & Your Heart Part 1: Chronic Iron Deficiency -

*Iron and Your Heart: The Newly Discovered Health Risks of Excess Iron-And How You Can Beat Them [Randall B., Ph.D. Lauffer] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Argues that too much iron in the system may be harmful and recommends a low-iron diet and frequent blood donations as a means of restoring a natural balance.*

Should Jennifer take the iron supplements her doctor prescribed? Jennifer was borderline anemic. Why are women protected against heart disease prior to menopause? Could the answer as to why women get heart disease 10 years later than men simply be because their iron levels are much lower? Were physicians from the Dark Ages actually onto something with their practice of blood letting? Why Do We Need Iron? If people who regularly lose blood and iron are protected against heart attacks, why do we worry so much about getting enough iron in our diet? It turns out that we need oxygen to survive. Who is at risk for iron deficiency? The main groups of people at risk for iron deficiency in the U. Studies show that even people without hemochromatosis, but still carry one copy of the gene, have a heart attack risk twice that of everyone else. Which foods are highest in iron? Would it surprise you that red meat is one of the highest sources of iron in the diet? With our meat heavy diets in the U. Iron in food comes in two different forms. The other form of iron, non-heme iron, is the type of iron found in plant-based foods. Plant-based foods high in iron include some vegetables, like spinach, as well as legumes, nuts, and seeds. In the past it was felt that it was the cholesterol and saturated fats in red and processed meats which caused the increased risk of heart attacks. Non-Heme Iron A second theory may be that it is the type of iron that matters. Iron May Damage Endothelial Cells A third theory is that iron is directly toxic to the inner layer of our arteries. Iron overload is not just dangerous to the heart but is also dangerous to the brain. What should Jennifer do? To achieve this goal, she made sure to eat legumes like lentils or beans, spinach, and sesame seeds every day. As lentils, beans, spinach, and sesame seeds are very high in non-heme iron, things quickly changed. Get Your Iron and Blood Levels Tested Your doctor can order some simple blood tests to check your iron levels and to see if you are anemic or not. However, if your iron levels are high, or your have hemochromatosis, you may want to consider reducing meat intake. Minimize Heme Iron If you are not menstruating or regularly donating blood, you may want to consider minimizing heme iron by limiting red and processed meats. Studies have not yet been done to see if the carnivores among us, or those who love meat with every meal, can be protected by donating blood to lower their iron levels. Donate Blood If you are healthy enough to donate blood then you may want to consider becoming a blood donor. Blood viscosity is a function of how well blood flows. There is also the possibility that much of the benefit of blood donation is from the volunteer effect. If you are interested in experiencing the tremendous health benefits that come from becoming a blood donor, please speak with your physician to make sure it is safe for you.

Chapter 4 : Iron and your health - Harvard Health

We've talked about the impact that chronic iron deficiency can have on your heart and now, continuing on with our series of Iron and Your Heart (in honour of Heart Month), I want to talk about the effect that too much iron - also known as hemochromatosis - can have on your heart.

Women who are pregnant need significantly more iron. According to the National Institutes of Health NIH , the recommended dietary allowance of iron for pregnant women is 27 milligrams per day. This could cause you to get too much of other vitamins, and may hurt your baby. Instead, talk to your doctor about taking an iron supplement along with your prenatal vitamin. You should add iron-fortified foods to their diet when your baby is 6 months of age. Always check with your pediatrician before giving your infant iron supplements. You menstruate Menstruation depletes iron stores. This is why women have higher anemia rates than men. Some research suggests that ethnicity is a risk factor for anemia. It is estimated that 19 percent of African-American and Mexican-American women are anemic. Compared to 9 to 12 percent of non-Hispanic white women. Researchers theorize that athletes may need more red blood cells to carry oxygen so they can keep exercising. You experience regular blood loss People who experience excessive blood loss often need extra iron. Regular blood donors and people who have gastrointestinal bleeding are at risk. Gastrointestinal bleeding can be caused by medications or conditions such as ulcers and cancer. The kidneys are responsible for making erythropoietin, a hormone that tells the body to make red blood cells. You may lose a small amount of blood during dialysis. And dialysis diets also often limit iron intake. Medications that can deplete iron include: After studying blood levels of iron, ferritin, vitamin D , magnesium , calcium , and phosphorus , the researchers found children with ADHD had lower levels of iron and ferritin. Ferritin stores iron inside the cells for later use.

Chapter 5 : Iron & Your Heart Part 2: Hemochromatosis -

Iron and Your Heart Health. A ranch house, a zip lock bag and some ordinary flour. Two experiments: 1)Some ordinary wheat flour such as can be found in most homes placed with some water in a zip.

This leads to abnormally low levels of red blood cells. This leads to a condition called anemia. Although there are different types of anemia, iron-deficiency anemia is the most common worldwide 1. Common causes of iron deficiency include inadequate iron intake due to poor diet or restrictive diets, inflammatory bowel disease, increased requirements during pregnancy and blood loss through heavy periods or internal bleeding. Whatever the cause, iron deficiency can result in unpleasant symptoms that can affect your quality of life. These include poor health, concentration and work productivity 2. Signs and symptoms of iron deficiency vary depending on the severity of the anemia, how quickly it develops, your age and current state of health. In some cases, people experience no symptoms. Here are 10 signs and symptoms of iron deficiency, starting with the most common. Share on Pinterest Feeling very tired is one of the most common symptoms of iron deficiency, affecting more than half of those who are deficient 3 , 4. This happens because your body needs iron to make a protein called hemoglobin, which is found in red blood cells. Hemoglobin helps carry oxygen around the body. In addition, your heart has to work harder to move more oxygen-rich blood around your body, which can make you tired 1. However, many people with iron deficiency experience low energy alongside weakness, feeling cranky, difficulty concentrating or poor productivity at work. Fatigue is one of the most common signs of iron deficiency. This is due to less oxygen reaching body tissues, depriving them of energy. Paleness Pale skin and pale coloring of the inside of the lower eyelids are other common signs of iron deficiency 5 , 6 , 7. The hemoglobin in red blood cells gives blood its red color, so low levels during iron deficiency make the blood less red. This paleness in people with iron deficiency can appear all over the body, or it can be limited to one area, such as the face, gums, inside of the lips or lower eyelids and even the nails 8. This is often one of the first things doctors will look for as a sign of iron deficiency. However, it should be confirmed with a blood test 6. Paleness is more commonly seen in moderate or severe cases of anemia 9. If you pull your lower eyelid down, the inside layer should be a vibrant red color. If it is a very pale pink or yellow color, this may indicate that you have iron deficiency. Paleness in general or in specific areas such as the face, lower inner eyelid or nails may be a sign of moderate or severe iron deficiency. This is caused by lower levels of hemoglobin, which gives blood its red color. Shortness of Breath Hemoglobin enables your red blood cells to carry oxygen around the body. When hemoglobin is low in your body during iron deficiency, oxygen levels will also be low. As a result, your breathing rate will increase as your body tries to get more oxygen. This is why shortness of breath is a common symptom 4. If you find yourself out of breath doing normal, daily tasks that you used to find easy, such as walking, climbing stairs or working out, iron deficiency could be to blame. Share on Pinterest Iron deficiency may cause headaches This symptom seems to be less common than others and is often coupled with lightheadedness or dizziness 4. In iron deficiency, low levels of hemoglobin in red blood cells mean that not enough oxygen can reach the brain. As a result, blood vessels in the brain can swell, causing pressure and headaches Although there are many causes of headaches, frequent, recurrent headaches and dizziness could be a sign of iron deficiency. Headaches and dizziness could be a sign of iron deficiency. The lack of hemoglobin means not enough oxygen reaches the brain, causing its blood vessels to swell and create pressure. Noticeable heartbeats, also known as heart palpitations, can be another symptom of iron-deficiency anemia. Hemoglobin is the protein in red blood cells that helps transport oxygen around the body. In iron deficiency, low levels of hemoglobin mean the heart has to work extra hard to carry oxygen. This can lead to irregular heartbeats, or the feeling that your heart is beating abnormally fast 4 , In extreme cases, it can lead to an enlarged heart, heart murmur or heart failure 4. However, these symptoms tend to be a lot less common. You would have to suffer from iron deficiency for a long time to experience them. In cases of iron deficiency, the heart has to work extra hard to transport oxygen around the body. This can lead to irregular or fast heartbeats and even heart murmurs, an enlarged heart or heart failure. Dry and Damaged Hair and Skin Dry and damaged skin and hair can be signs of iron deficiency 4. This is because when your body is

iron deficient, it directs its limited oxygen to more important functions, such as organs and other bodily tissues. When skin and hair are deprived of oxygen, it can become dry and weak. More severe cases of iron deficiency have been linked to hair loss ¹⁴ , It is completely normal for some hair to fall out during everyday washing and brushing, but if you are losing clumps or much more than normal, it may be due to iron deficiency. Because skin and hair receive less oxygen from the blood during iron deficiency, they can become dry and damaged. In more severe cases, this can cause hair loss. Sometimes just looking inside or around your mouth can give you an indication of whether you are suffering from iron-deficiency anemia. Signs include when your tongue becomes swollen, inflamed, pale or strangely smooth Low hemoglobin in iron deficiency can cause the tongue to become pale, while lower levels of myoglobin can cause it to become sore, smooth and swollen. Myoglobin is a protein in red blood cells that supports your muscles, such as the muscle that makes up the tongue Iron deficiency can also cause dry mouth, sore red cracks at the corners of the mouth or mouth ulcers A sore, swollen or strangely smooth tongue can be a sign of iron-deficiency anemia. Cracks on the corners of the mouth can also be a sign. Share on Pinterest Iron deficiency has been linked to restless leg syndrome Restless leg syndrome is a strong urge to move your legs at rest. It can also cause unpleasant and strange crawling or itchy sensations in the feet and legs. It is usually worse at night, meaning that sufferers may struggle to get much sleep. The causes of restless leg syndrome are not fully understood. People with iron-deficiency anemia have a higher chance of experiencing restless leg syndrome. This is a strong urge to move the legs when at rest. A much less common symptom of iron deficiency is brittle or spoon-shaped fingernails, a condition called koilonychia ⁸ , This often starts with brittle nails that chip and crack easily. In later stages of iron deficiency, spoon-shaped nails can occur where the middle of the nail dips and the edges are raised to give a rounded appearance like a spoon. However, this is a rare side effect and usually only seen in severe cases of iron-deficiency anemia. Brittle or spoon-shaped nails can be an indicator of more severe iron-deficiency anemia. There are several other signs that your iron could be low. These tend to be less common and can be linked to many conditions other than iron deficiency. Other signs of iron-deficiency anemia include: It can also occur during pregnancy The lack of oxygen available to body tissues in iron deficiency may cause feelings of anxiety. However, this tends to improve or resolve as iron levels are corrected Cold hands and feet: Iron deficiency means less oxygen is being delivered to the hands and feet. Some people may feel the cold more easily in general or have cold hands and feet. Because iron is needed for a healthy immune system, lack of it may cause you to catch more illnesses than usual Other more generic signs of iron deficiency may include strange food cravings, feeling anxious, cold hands and feet and an increased risk of infections. If you think you have iron-deficiency anemia, consider the following advice. A simple blood test will confirm whether you have iron-deficiency anemia ³. If your doctor confirms you have iron deficiency, you will likely be able to treat it fairly easily by increasing your intake of iron from your diet or with iron supplements ⁴. The main aim of treatment is to restore hemoglobin levels to normal and replenish iron stores. Try to ensure you are getting enough iron through real food in your diet. Only take supplements if your doctor recommends them. Eat Iron-Rich Foods If your doctor thinks your iron deficiency may be caused by a lack of iron in your diet, think about consuming more iron-rich foods , such as: Red meat, pork and poultry Dark green, leafy vegetables, such as spinach and kale Dried fruit, such as raisins and apricots Peas, beans and other pulses Seafood Seeds and nuts Help Boost Your Iron Absorption Importantly, eating vitamin C will help your body absorb iron better. Make sure you eat enough vitamin C-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables It may also be beneficial to avoid certain foods that can inhibit iron absorption when eaten in large amounts. These include tea and coffee and foods high in calcium such as dairy products and whole-grain cereals. Take Iron Supplements If Your Doctor Recommends Them Generally, you should only take an iron supplement as a last resort and if your doctor recommends it. This will likely be the case if you are unable to restore your iron levels through diet alone. If you do take an iron supplement, try drinking orange juice with it to boost iron absorption. Keep in mind that there are some unpleasant side effects of taking iron supplements.

Chapter 6 : Iron Deficiency and Heart Rate - Reviews

You need to know if it is an arrhythmia or sinus, what is truly causing it and your iron deficiency! Are you anemic as well? I was for almost 4 years when my heart failure took over, I finally had to have 2 iron infusions and my hemoglobin went back up to normal, as did my RBC (red blood cell count) and iron levels.

I had a really rapid heart rate going in excess of beats per minute upon standing, since taking Iron supplements it is very slowly returning to normal, my Doc said it could take up to 6 month fro everything to go back to normal because I was so anemic, having an iron level of only 7. Fri, April 4, 7: I thought it maybe due to stress. I work full-time and go to school full-time. I also thought it was because I was over weight. I have told my regular doctor that I had these symptoms before and they looked at me like I was crazy or told me I needed to lose weight. I recently decided to go to a county doctor because I work for the county. The county in which I work has hired their own doctors and employees do not have to pay anything not even prescriptions. I went in because the palpitations were getting so bad at night that they would awaken me. The doctor I saw was a young doctor. He seems really eager to do the right thing and to make me feel better. He first put me on blood pressure medicine. Today I went in and he took blood work to check to see if I was Anemic. He said the symptoms that I have are red flags for that. He said that being Anemic can raise your blood pressure. I go back next Monday to find out the results. I hope I can wait that long. It is horrible not to be able to sleep at night when you can hear your heart beating so loudly. Mon, June 16, I am going through a very difficult period but everything that your have talked about in iron deficiency and all the heart symptoms is what I am experiencing very badly. I am scheduled for IV with iron- 3 sessions- the first one being on July 15, I am so happy to find this site and your explanations are so correct to my scenario. I have done so many tests and they have come out negative. It is now anemia that I have. My doctor said I have anxiety but your video touched on this as well and I am happy to find this video. Thank you, thank you and thank you. Thu, July 10, 9: I am also so glad someone shared your site with me. I have RA for 30 years and numerous other health conditions now. I was treated this year with small cell right lung limited cancer. Thank God the chemo and radiaiton are finished. But I am very concerned about the RBC numbers. I did have a red blood cell infusuion back on June Recently my Cardio Dr did a Hemogram, my numbers are low and some below normal, but not low enough to have red blood cells again. The fatigue is so great and extreme and they say it is from the chemo and radiation, but I had this before I had those. I am still searching for answers. I did find a wonderful iron supp call Hema-Plex that worked good for me. I took it for a couple years, my numbers got better and I stopped, now they are so low again. I see Chemo Dr. I need a good education on this anemia thing. Thank you for this support site! Wed, August 20, 4: Hi, I am dealing with anemia and I have good days and bad days. I have found that stress and a hectic schedule makes it worse. This cannot be avoided, however, since I am a student and also have to work. I eat iron rich foods and am taking iron pills, but it is still so hard to simply wake up and get moving because of the exhaustion. I used to work out a few times per week, but do not even have the energy for that. Thankfully, I teach dance twice per week so that gets me moving. I also work retail, and after hours of standing I feel extremely weak. Do any of you relate to that? Perhaps I should ask if I can sit if my doctor writes a note. I feel like I am in an endless battle with just feeling good. After a full weekend of work frid thru sund I have to have a day to recover I would appreciate your feedback! Mon, February 22, 4: Rose I felt like I was reading something I had written about myself! My sx are nearly identicle. I did not expect the low energy, lack of motivation, etc to continue like this My iron level was at 13 2 wks ago, Hgb was 9. I feel almost the same as I did 2 wks ago Tue, February 23, 4: Thank you all for sharing. He has no idea how I feel. I have the same symptoms everyone else is having. Praying for healing for us all!!!! Fri, May 13, 6: Insomnia aswell is one of the most common symptoms that people with Anemia tend to ignore. I thought it was gone but it was actually getting worse gradually. I missed my finals because I fainted multiple time and I ended up failing my senior year. Fri, June 3, 8: For over a year I have been experiencing heart palpitations. I went to the ER several times because they were so strong. I really hard knock on my chest. They lasted for weeks on end and I got very frustrated because doctors would tell me it was due to stress and anxiety. My doctor then did a halter to

watch my heart for 24 hours. PVC is what came up and he said it was due to stress and anxiety. I am 45 years old. I was prescribed Atenolol and it seemed to work so I chalked it up to anxiety. Then this past week I had a period that was really heavy. Heavier than I have had ever. My heart started palpitating again. It hit me like a ton of bricks. It has to be anemia because I have been taking my heart meds regularly. Doctors have a hard time taking my blood because my veins blow all the time. I am dizzy constantly. I thought it was my eyes, turns out not. So I narrowed down everything and it must be anemia. I started taking vitamins and an iron supplement. It has only been one day since I started the Iron but I hope it works. My chest is starting to hurt from the muscles being punched by the palpitations and I am tired all the time. Here is to fingers crossed that I get the palpitations to stop because I am about ready to cry and break. Tue, August 23, 1: But At The Last Minute! So I went to My Dr. My Husband Took Off Work! My Sister Drove from CA. He Was Beating Around the Bush. I Was Doing All the Stuff they told me to do!! I Do Have Heart Palpitations!

Chapter 7 : Iron deficiency may raise heart disease risk

Other symptoms of iron deficiency often accompany increased heart rate. You may notice that your skin seems pale, your nails have become brittle or spoon-shaped, the whites of your eyes have acquired a blue tint, and your tongue feels swollen.

Iron is critical for producing hemoglobin, a protein that helps red blood cells deliver oxygen throughout your body. So without it, everything suffers -- and can lead to anemia. If your "normal" fatigue is coupled with you feeling, weak, irritable, or unable to focus, iron or a lack thereof might have something to do with it. Try the tampon test: If you have to change your tampon more frequently than every two hours, talk to your gyno. Hemoglobin gives your blood its red color and, thus, your skin its rosy hue. That means that low levels of the protein can suck the color straight from your skin, Dr. No matter your skin tone, though, if the inside of your lips, your gums, and the inside of your bottom eyelids are less red than usual, low iron may be to blame. Signs You May Have an Iron Deficiency Your heart is pounding An overworked heart can end up suffering from irregular heartbeats, heart murmurs, enlargement, and even heart failure. For things to get that bad, you would probably have to suffer from iron deficiency anemia for quite some time, suggests a review of cardiomyopathy and iron deficiency in the Texas Heart Institute Journal. The lower the iron levels, the worse the symptoms. Signs You May Have an Iron Deficiency Your head hurts An iron-deficient body will prioritize getting oxygen to your brain before it worries about other tissues, but even then, your noggin will still get less than it ideally should, Dr. Signs You May Have an Iron Deficiency You crave clay, dirt, and ice Called pica, craving and actually eating non-food substances can be a sign of iron deficiency. Iron-deficient people may be tempted to chow down on chalk, clay, dirt, and paper. Luckily, most women opt for ice, says Dr. Berliner, who tells her anemic patients to come back to see her if they start craving ice. Most scalps lose about hairs on a good day. Your body absorbs heme iron -- which comes from meat, poultry, and fish -- two to three times more efficiently than non-heme iron from plants, says nutritionist Rania Batayneh, author of The One One Diet. You can still get enough iron with careful meal planning. Dark leafy greens, whole grains, and legumes are all rich in iron; pair them with vitamin-C-rich foods like bell peppers, berries, and broccoli to boost your absorption. Signs You May Have an Iron Deficiency Your tongue looks weird Besides sapping the color out of your tongue, low iron counts can reduce levels of myoglobin, a protein in red blood cells that supports muscle health, like the muscle that makes up the tongue, Dr. As a result, many people who are iron deficient complain of a sore, inflamed, and strangely smooth tongue. These conditions cause inflammation in and damage to the digestive tract. Women between the ages of 19 and 50 typically need 18 mg per day. Plus, how heavy your periods are could also alter your needs. Older than 50 and not menstruating? You only need 8 mg per day.

Chapter 8 : Anemia and Your Heart | Everyday Health

Iron and Heart Disease Risk Iron can generate free radical pathology. There is now good evidence that free radical pathology leads to changes in the blood vessels which sets the stage for atherosclerosis.

Her work has appeared in several professional and peer-reviewed publications including "Nutrition in Clinical Practice. During the first stage, your body gradually depletes stored iron. During the second stage, not enough iron is available for the production of red blood cells, so you become anemic. Red blood cells use iron to ferry oxygen around the body. Video of the Day Features When you become iron deficient, your heart rate typically increases. Mayo Clinic physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist Dr. Edward Laskowski says athletes often have lower resting heart rates -- about 40 beats per minute. When you become iron deficient, your heart rate typically increases. In some cases, you or your doctor may recognize an increase from your previous baseline. Associated Symptoms You may demonstrate increased fatigue. You may notice that your skin seems pale, your nails have become brittle or spoon-shaped, the whites of your eyes have acquired a blue tint, and your tongue feels swollen. You may notice other changes, such as increased fatigue, irritability, headaches, shortness of breath, muscle weakness, decreased exercise tolerance or taste changes. Diagnosis If you suspect that your heart rate has increased due to iron deficiency, see your doctor. A blood test for hemoglobin, hematocrit and ferritin can confirm whether you are iron deficient. Other types of anemia may also contribute to increased heart rate. Additional blood tests may be required to diagnose anemia due to B₁₂, folate, B₆ or other deficiencies. Sometimes, your body has enough iron and other nutrients to make new red blood cells, but chronic diseases or other medical problems render it unable to use these raw materials. Treatment If your doctor confirms that your heart rate has increased due to iron deficiency, he may recommend oral iron supplements to correct the deficiency. Oral iron supplements do not work for some people -- especially those with gastrointestinal problems such as inflammatory bowel disease. These people require intravenous or intramuscular iron injections to correct deficiencies. Monitoring You should start to feel better a few days after you begin taking iron. Your heart rate may not return to normal for two months, which is approximately the amount of time it takes for hematocrit and hemoglobin to return to normal. Your doctor may order a repeat blood test to confirm that iron supplements are working. If the cause of your iron deficiency is ongoing -- such as heavy menstrual periods, vegetarian diet or antacid use -- you may need to take small amounts of supplemental iron for the rest of your life. Considerations Increased heart rate means your heart is working harder than normal. If your heart is already unhealthy, this can put you over the edge. If you experience chest pain, loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing or swelling in your legs, contact your doctor or go to the emergency room because these are signs of serious heart problems.

Chapter 9 : 3 Easy Ways You Can Optimize Dietary Iron and Cardiac Blood Flow - Dr. John Day

For example, high levels of heme iron, which is the type of iron found in red meat, is consistently associated with heart attacks in studies. However, non-heme iron, or the form of iron found from plant-based sources, may prevent heart disease.

Iron and your health Published: May, If you feel run-down, lack of iron is probably not the cause. You can easily get enough of this key mineral in your diet. Decades ago, advertising for the liquid vitamin and mineral supplement Geritol warned against "iron-poor, tired blood. If you feel fatigued, the reason is unlikely to be a lack of iron. On the other hand, if your iron stores are low, you would definitely want to know about it. The main thing your doctor will want to rule out is hidden bleeding. And as for getting the relatively small amount of iron you need for health, a nutritious diet should do the trick without any need for iron supplements. It can happen because the body lacks sufficient supply of iron, a condition called iron-deficiency anemia. Blood tests can check for anemia. Ferritin latches onto iron and sequesters it in the liver, spleen, and bone marrow. When the body needs to draw on its iron account, it comes out of the ferritin bank. Low iron stores can lead to anemia as well as other health problems, since iron has a wider role. Iron supplements can trigger gastrointestinal discomfort and constipation, so you may need to take them in gradually increasing doses. Meats contain the most easily absorbed form of iron, called heme iron. Good sources of iron Adult men need to take in an average of 8 milligrams of iron every day from food. Here is where to get it: Artificially fortified foods, like breakfast cereals and grains, help to meet daily iron requirements. Animal foods contain heme iron, the form that the body absorbs most easily. Sources include beef or calf heart, chicken, eggs, liver, ham, pork, red salmon, and sardines. Many plant foods are also good sources of iron. These include beet, dandelion, and mustard greens; kale, leeks, spinach, and Swiss chard; beans, lentils, and peas; and nuts, seeds, and whole grains. Thinkstock Iron and aging Although iron-deficiency anemia is uncommon in the general population, it becomes more prevalent with aging. Possible causes include hidden bleeding from ulcers or an inflamed stomach lining gastritis , inflammatory bowel disease, and colon cancer. The process might include upper endoscopy to check the throat for bleeding or a colonoscopy to rule out colon cancer or other possible causes of blood loss. Dark or tarry stools are a red-flag sign of gastrointestinal bleeding. Sometimes the "leak" is never pinpointed, and it may just stop on its own. Iron in your diet The USDA recommends that adult men get 8 milligrams of iron per day in their diets. Red meat, fish, and poultry contain the most easily absorbed form of dietary iron, called heme iron. Egg yolks also contain some heme iron. People who eat little or no meat must take in more iron from whole grains, leafy greens, and other iron-rich plant foods. Although Popeye reached for a can of spinach when he needed a quick power boost, the body does not actually absorb iron from plants as readily as from meat. You therefore need to compensate with quantity. Vitamin C helps the body absorb iron from food, though taking a vitamin C supplement is not necessary. But beware, because excess iron can build up to toxic levels.