

FIT FOR SURGERY

FIT FOR LIFE

IRON DEFICIENCY: THE FACTS



About 1 in 10 people in Australia have low iron levels also called iron deficiency



3 in 10 people having elective surgery have low iron or anaemia - this puts you at a much higher risk of transfusion.

CAUSES OF ANAEMIA



Chronic disease



Blood loss



Dietary deficiency (iron, B12)



Gastrointestinal problems

WHY IS IRON IMPORTANT?



You need iron to make haemoglobin. Haemoglobin carries oxygen from your lungs to your body.



If left untreated low iron levels and anaemia can:

- delay your surgery.
- increase your chance of needing a blood transfusion.
- increase your chance of complications.
- slow down your recovery after surgery.



Having anaemia before you go in for surgery puts you at a higher risk of needing a blood transfusion.

Blood is a precious commodity and should not be used lightly.

A blood transfusion is an organ transplant and comes with inherent risks.



ACTION

Your GP will assess your blood to see if you have low levels of iron or if you have anaemia. If they find you do you may need treatment.

There are other information leaflets available that will give you more information about what you need to do now that you are on the surgery waiting list. Ask your GP for the link to these resources.



NATIONAL BLOOD AUTHORITY
AUSTRALIA



NPS
MEDICINEWISE



MY IRON PLAN

This is your personal iron record. It's YOUR record - so keep it with you. But you need your care team to help you fill it in. And ask your GP, your surgeon, your anaesthetist and anyone else involved in your care to help you keep it up to date.

Name
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GP Name
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Preparing for surgery

Iron studies results
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Treatment
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Date
.....

Iron studies results
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Treatment
.....

Date
.....

Surgery

Blood loss
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Perioperative transfusion required
.....

Number of units
.....

Date
.....

Recovery

Iron studies results
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Treatment
.....

Reassessment Date
.....