

# Anemia

*Also known as Iron-poor blood, Low blood, Tired blood*

[Leer en español](#)

Anemia is a condition in which your blood has a lower-than-normal amount of red blood cells or hemoglobin.



## Overview

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Hemoglobin is an iron-rich protein that helps red blood cells carry oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. If you have anemia, your body does not get enough oxygen-rich blood. This can cause you to feel tired or weak. You may also have shortness of breath, dizziness, headaches, or an irregular heartbeat.

There are many types and causes of anemia. Mild anemia is a common and treatable condition that can occur in anyone. Some people are at a higher risk for anemia, including women during their menstrual periods and pregnancy and people who donate blood frequently, do not get enough iron or certain vitamins, or take certain medicines or treatments, such as chemotherapy for cancer.

Anemia may also be a sign of a more serious condition. It may result from [chronic](#) bleeding in the stomach. Chronic [inflammation](#) from an infection, kidney disease, cancer, or autoimmune diseases can also cause the body to make fewer red blood cells.

Your doctor will consider your medical history and physical exam and test results when diagnosing and treating anemia. He or she will use a simple blood test to confirm that you have low amounts of red blood cells or hemoglobin. For some types of mild to moderate anemia, your doctor may recommend over-the-counter or prescription iron supplements, certain vitamins, intravenous iron therapy, or medicines that make your body produce more red blood cells. To prevent anemia in the future, your doctor may also suggest healthy eating changes. If you have severe anemia, your doctor may recommend red blood cell transfusions.

Visit [Anemia](#) for more information about this topic.

We lead or sponsor many studies on anemia. See if you or someone you know is eligible to participate in our [clinical trials](#) .

Do you or a family member have Diamond-Blackfan anemia?

This registry seeks to collect information from patients who have Diamond-Blackfan anemia (DBA), in order to help researchers and doctors learn more about the condition. The registry will also help connect patients with DBA to research and clinical studies, and possible treatment options. The registry accepts all patients diagnosed with DBA.

View more information about [Diamond-Blackfan Anemia Registry\\_\(DBAR\)](#).

Did you recently give birth to a very low birth weight infant?

The study is investigating how anemia and red blood cell transfusions affect oxygen levels in the digestive tract of very low birth weight infants. To participate in this study, your newborn must have had a very low birth weight and be within seven days of birth. The study is taking place in Atlanta, Georgia.

View more information about [RBC Irradiation, Anemia and Gut Injury\\_\(RBC-mNIRS\)](#).

Do you want to take part in blood research?

This study aims to screen patients at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center who have a blood disorder such as anemia and who may be eligible to participate in studies in the Hematology Branch. It will also determine whether it is safe for you to participate in those studies. Participants in this study must be 2 years or older. This study is located in Bethesda, Maryland.

View more information about [Screening for Hematology Branch Protocols](#).

Learn more about [participating in a clinical trial](#).

View all trials from [ClinicalTrials.gov](#) .

Visit [Children and Clinical Studies](#) to hear experts, parents, and children talk about their experiences with clinical research.

## More Information

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#### Other Resources

- [Your Guide to Anemia](#) [PDF - 1.49 MB]

#### RELATED NEWS

January 18, 2019 | Research Feature

### A donor's genes might hold the key to the shelf life of red blood cells

Every two seconds someone in the United States needs blood. Five million people receive a blood transfusion every year in the U.S. In a country where blood is perennially in short supply, it is the most common medical procedure of all. Yet giving to a blood bank is not always a slam dunk—some people get turned away because of strict rules meant for...

[View all news on Iron-Deficiency Anemia](#)

#### RELATED EVENT

### Novel Molecular Etiologies of Dyserythropoiesis Workshop

September 09, 2016

6701 Rockledge Drive, (Conference Room 9100/9104)  
Bethesda, MD 20892

This September 2016 workshop considered the gaps in our knowledge and technology that are barriers to our understand...

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