

- The dosage regimen of two IFA tablets per day should be repeated for three months post-partum also.

Counselling pregnant women on anaemia:

- Encourage women to take iron-rich foods such as green leafy vegetables, whole pulses, ragi, jaggery, meat and liver. This advice should be discussed with family and finalised based on the family situation.
- Encourage the woman, where possible, to take plenty of fruits and vegetables containing vitamin C (such as mango, guava, orange and sweet lime) as these enhance the absorption of iron.
- Counsel the women on the necessity of taking IFA, the dangers associated with anaemia, and inform the women that these side-effects are common and not serious, and will reduce over time.
- IFA tablets must be taken regularly, preferably early in the morning on an empty stomach. If the woman has nausea and pain in abdomen, she may take the tablets after meals or at night. This will avoid nausea.
- Dispel the myths and misconceptions related to IFA and convince the woman about the importance of taking it. An example of a common myth is that the consumption of IFA may affect baby's complexion.
- Many women do not take IFA tablets regularly due to some common side-effects such as nausea, constipation and black stools. Tell women not to worry about passing black stool while consuming IFA. It is normal.
- In case of constipation, the woman should drink more water and add roughage (plenty of green leafy vegetables) to her diet.
- IFA tablets should not be consumed with tea, coffee, milk or calcium tablet as it reduces the absorption of iron.
- IFA tablets may make the woman feel less tired than before. However, despite feeling better, she should not stop taking the tablets and must complete the course as advised by the healthcare provider.
- Ask the woman to return to you if she has problem taking IFA tablets.



How do you get the IFA?

The IFA tablets are part of your drug kit. Try to ensure that you always have enough stock. Either your facilitator or a person appointed by the MO of the PHC is given the responsibility of refills for the drug kit. IFA tablets are also made available at VHND or in any health facility.