**How to increase our haemoglobin level?**

Before we talk about how to increase our haemoglobin level let us find out a little more about haemoglobin.

**A.What is haemoglobin?**

Hemoglobin is an iron-rich protein in red blood cells. Oxygen entering the lungs, attaches itself to the hemoglobin in the blood, which carries it to the tissues in the body.Also carbon-dioxide attaches itself to haemoglobin in the blood and is transported to the lungs from where it is released outside our body when we exhale.

Each hemoglobin protein can carry four molecules of oxygen, which are delivered throughout the body by red blood cells. Every one of the body's billions of cells needs oxygen to repair and maintain itself.

Hemoglobin also plays a role in helping red blood cells obtain their disc-like shape, which helps them move easily through blood vessels.

A low haemoglobin level can also lead to extreme fatigue, bruising easily, fainting spells and in some cases lack of blood clotting. Usually a low hemoglobin count is due to deficiency in iron, however, there may be other reasons for it too, like excessive dieting, living an unhealthy lifestyle, some diseases and cancers. It is essential that you visit a doctor to get a more accurate diagnosis of the cause.

As we can see that haemoglobin is a very important component of our blood without which oxygen cannot be transported in the body and we all know that our body cannot survive without oxygen.

Now that we have established the importance of haemoglobin let us move on to find out that what are the ideal haemoglobin levels.

**B.Normal haemoglobin levels:**

In the routine laboratory test for hemoglobin (Hb), it is usually measured as total hemoglobin and the result is expressed as the amount of hemoglobin in grams (gm) per deciliter (dl) of whole blood, a deciliter being 100 milliliters.

The normal ranges for hemoglobin depend on the age and, beginning in adolescence, the sex of the person. The normal ranges are:

* Newborns: 17-22 gm/dl
* One (1) week of age: 15-20 gm/dl
* One (1) month of age: 11-15gm/dl
* Children: 11-13 gm/dl
* Adult males: 14-18 gm/dl
* Adult women: 12-16 gm/dl
* Men after middle age: 12.4-14.9 gm/dl
* Women after middle age: 11.7-13.8 gm/dl

All of these values may vary slightly between laboratories. Some laboratories do not differentiate between adult and "after middle age" hemoglobin values.

**C: How to increase our haemoglobin levels?**

1.Iron deficiency is one of the major causes of decrease in our hemoglobin levels so the first step to increase it is to eat food rich in iron like liver and organ meats,shellfish ,broccoli,kale,spinach,green beans ,cabbage etc.

2. Deficiency of folate (folic acid) can also cause decrease in hemoglobin levels.By adding folate to your diet ( spinach, black-eyed peas ,avocado, lettuce, rice, kidney beans and peanuts) you can increase your haemoglobin levels.

3. Sometimes the doctor may prescribe iron-tablets due to severity of anaemia but it is not advisable to take these without medical consultation because too much iron can cause a condition called hemochromatosis.This can lead to liver diseases such as cirrhosis, and other side effects, such as constipation, nausea, and vomiting.

4.Increase in Vitamin C rich food increases iron absorption so eat food rich in Vitamin C like citrus fruits, strawberry and green leafy vegetables.

5. Similarly Vitamin A and beta-carotene help in iron absorption by the body so food rich in Vitamin A like liver and fish and beta-carotene like carrots,winter squash,sweet potatoes and mangoes are recommended.

6. Though there is a long list of food which can increase our hemoglobin levels there are some foods that we must avoid immediately after taking iron supplements like food rich in calcium( dairy, dark leafy greens, soybeans, seeds,figs etc) or phytic acid(walnuts, brazil nuts and sesame seeds).This is because calcium and phytic acid decrease iron absorption.

Now in some cases diet alone may not be able to help you especially in case of chronic diseases or pregnancy so it would be better to consult a doctor.

Source of Information:<https://www.medicinenet.com>