

# Anemia

## FACT SHEET

Do you feel **TIRED**? Ask your doctor about **ANEMIA**.

### WHAT IS IT?

If you have anemia, you have less blood (or hemoglobin) to carry oxygen to the rest of your body. You can think of hemoglobin as your blood's "oxygen deliveryman."



People with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis are at risk for anemia.



Approximately 1 in 3 people with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis has anemia.



It's serious, but can be treated.

### SYMPTOMS

- Most common symptom is feeling tired.
- Other symptoms can include:



DIZZINESS



HEADACHES

COLD HANDS/FEET



SHORTNESS OF BREATH



PALE SKIN

- Not everyone experiences symptoms, so get tested.

### CAUSES

- Low iron (most common cause):
  - » Inflammation in your intestines can interfere with your body's ability to use or absorb iron
  - » Blood loss from intestinal bleeding
- Poor absorption of vitamins and minerals, like vitamin B12 or folic acid
- Medications



### TREATMENTS

- Iron supplements for those with low iron:
  - » Oral iron for people with inactive Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis
  - » Intravenous iron for people with active Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, or for people who cannot tolerate oral iron
- Vitamin B12 or folic acid supplements
- Getting Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis under control with the right medication
- Blood transfusions (in severe cases)



### GET TESTED

- Simple blood tests ordered by your doctor will show whether or not you have anemia.
- Blood tests can also help determine the cause of your anemia.



### ASK YOUR DOCTOR



1. Could my symptoms be from anemia?
2. Should I get tested for anemia?
3. What is causing my anemia?
4. What is the best way to treat my anemia?
5. Are there other treatment options available?
6. Should I see a blood specialist (i.e., hematologist)?

Have a Question?



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