



ANAEMIA

Anaemia/anemia is the most common disorder of the blood. Anemia is a Greek word, meaning lack of blood. There is a decrease in number of red blood cells (RBCs) or less than the normal quantity of hemoglobin in the blood. Because hemoglobin (found inside RBCs) normally carries oxygen from the lungs to various organs, anemia leads to lack of oxygen in organs. Since all human cells depend on oxygen for survival, varying degrees of anemia can have a wide range of consequences.

Anaemia goes undetermined in many people, and symptoms can be minor or vague. The signs and symptoms can be related to the underlying cause or the anaemia itself. Most commonly, people with anaemia report feelings of weakness, or fatigue, general malaise, and sometimes poor concentration. They may also report shortness of breath on exertion. In very severe anaemia, the patient may have symptoms of breathlessness, palpitations or chest pain (especially if pre-existing heart disease is present). If a pregnant lady is anaemic, it affects the growth of the baby. Chronic anaemia may result in behavioral disturbances and reduced scholastic performance in children of school age.

Anaemia is produced by a variety of underlying causes. It can be classified in a variety of ways, based on the morphology of RBCs, underlying etiologic mechanisms, and discernible clinical spectra, to mention a few. The three main classes include excessive blood loss (eg. excessive menstrual flow/piles), red blood cell destruction (eg. malaria) or deficient red blood cell production by the body.

Pica, the consumption of non-food items such as chalk, soil, paper, wax, grass, ice, and hair, may be a symptom of iron deficiency. As vitamin B12 is mainly present in non-vegetarian food, vegetarians commonly have anaemia because of vitamin B12 deficiency which is known as megaloblastic anaemia. Some people have ineffective production of haemoglobin in the bone marrow (where

normal blood is produced) eg. Thalassemia, which a person acquires genetically from parents.

Anaemia is typically diagnosed on a complete blood count, commonly known as CBC. This is the commonest investigation done in any patient. CBC is nowadays done on automated cell counters. Apart from reporting the number of red blood cells and the hemoglobin level, the automated counters also measure the size of the red blood cells which is an important tool in distinguishing between the causes of anemia. Examination of a stained blood smear using a microscope can also be helpful, and it is sometimes a necessity in regions of the world where automated analysis is less accessible.

Iron deficiency is the most common cause of anemia. It is due to insufficient dietary intake or absorption of iron to meet the body's needs. Infants, toddlers, and pregnant women have higher than average needs. Iron deficiency is the most prevalent deficiency state on a worldwide basis. Most common cause is nutritional, intestinal parasites (worms) or blood loss (from gut or menses). Mild to moderate iron-deficiency anemia is treated by oral iron supplementation with iron tablets. Iron tablets have to be taken for minimum 3 to 4 months not only for improving the haemoglobin but to build up adequate stores of iron in the body. When taking iron supplements, stomach upset and / or darkening of the faeces, are commonly experienced. The stomach upset can be alleviated by taking the iron with food; however, this decreases the amount of iron absorbed. Vitamin C aids in the body's ability to absorb iron, so taking oral iron supplements with orange/lime juice is of benefit. If the patient has intolerance to oral iron supplement, iron can be given as an injection. The newer iron preparations allow total dose of iron to be delivered in less than half an hour. The biggest advantage of them is that you don't have to take iron for a long time. Chronic blood loss because of excessive bleeding during menses or because of piles has to be treated.

Vegetarians particularly have anaemia because of Vitamin B12 deficiency. The patient is usually prescribed intramuscular injections of Vitamin B12 eg. Inj. Vitcofol. Oral preparations of Vitamin B12 can also be given in cases with mild Vitamin B12 deficiency. The vegetarian diet which contains Vitamin B12 is milk and milk products like paneer, cheese, curd, butter etc.

When the problem is not nutritional like iron or vitamin B12 deficiency, which is commonly treated by any family physician, it requires special tests & consultation by an expert i.e. haematologist (a blood disorder specialist). Do consult me if you have persistent low haemoglobin for which you & your family doctor have tried everything and it is still not improving.



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"Weaning"

first solid food for baby



When should I start to give my baby solids (weaning?)

You should start giving your baby solid foods often called 'weaning' when they are around six months old. The latest research from the World Health Organisation shows before this time your baby's digestive system is not developed enough to cope with solid foods. Feeding your baby before six months of age could lead to diarrhoea and vomiting.

Signs that your baby is ready for solids

Every baby is different but there are three clear signs which, together show that your baby is ready for some solid foods alongside your breast milk or Infant Formula. It is very rare for these signs to appear together before six months.

- They stay in a sitting position and hold their head steady.
- They coordinate their eyes, hand and mouth so that they can look at the food, pick it up and put in their mouth all by themselves.
- They can swallow food. Babies who are not ready will push their food back out.
- Signs mistaken for a baby being ready for solid foods
- Chewing of fists.
- They wake in the night when they have previously slept through.

- They want extra milk feeds.

These are normal behaviours extra feeds of milk are usually enough until they're ready for other food.

First foods

Your baby's first solid foods should be simple so they can be easily digested such as:

- Mashed or pureed cooked parsnip, potato, yam, sweet potato or carrot
- Mashed or pureed banana, avocado, cooked apple or pear
- Pieces of fruit or vegetables that are small enough for your baby to pick up.

Once your baby has got used to eating fruit and vegetables, you can start adding other foods such as

- Lentils, split pulses or hummus
- Full fat dairy products, such as yoghurt, fromage frais or custard
- Small pieces of toast

Most babies can chew soft lumps such as mashed banana, mashed vegetable or cottage cheese even if they have no teeth. Varying the texture of the food will get them used to chewing and help to develop the muscles used for speaking.

Peripheral Nerves

A Guide To The Common Man

The human nervous system consists of four parts: the brain, spinal cord, autonomic nervous system, and peripheral nerves. Peripheral nerves are cord-like structures containing bundles of nerve fibers that transmit signals from the spinal cord to the rest of the body, or to transmit sensory information from the rest of the body to the spinal cord. Your peripheral nerves are the ones outside your brain and spinal cord. Like static on a telephone line, peripheral nerve disorders distort or interrupt the messages between the brain and the rest of the body.

The nerves in our bodies are very similar to electric cables. The brain and spinal cord send electrical signals through the nerves to different muscles. The muscles, in turn, have specialized mechanism to properly understand the electrical signals and act accordingly, thus moving different parts of the body.

There are three types of peripheral nerves: motor, sensory and autonomic. Some neuropathies affect all three types of nerves, while others involve only one or two.

Motor nerves send impulses from the brain and spinal cord to all of the muscles in the body. This permits people to do activities like walking, catching a ball, or moving the fingers to pick something up. Motor nerve damage can lead to muscle weakness, difficulty walking or moving the arms, cramps, and spasms.

Sensory nerves send messages in the other direction—from the muscles back to the spinal cord and the brain. Special sensors in the skin and deep inside the body help people identify if an object is sharp, rough, or smooth, if it's hot or cold, or if a body part is still or in motion. Sensory nerve damage often results in tingling, numbness, pain, and extreme sensitivity to touch.

Autonomic nerves control involuntary or semi-voluntary functions, such as heart rate, blood pressure, digestion, and sweating. When the autonomic nerves are damaged, a person's heart may beat faster or slower. They may get dizzy when standing up, sweat excessively, or have difficulty sweating at all.

There are various kinds of peripheral nerve disorders. They can affect one nerve (mononeuropathy) or many nerves (polyneuropathy). In some cases, like complex regional pain syndrome and brachial plexus injuries, the problem begins after an injury. Some people are born with peripheral nerve disorders.

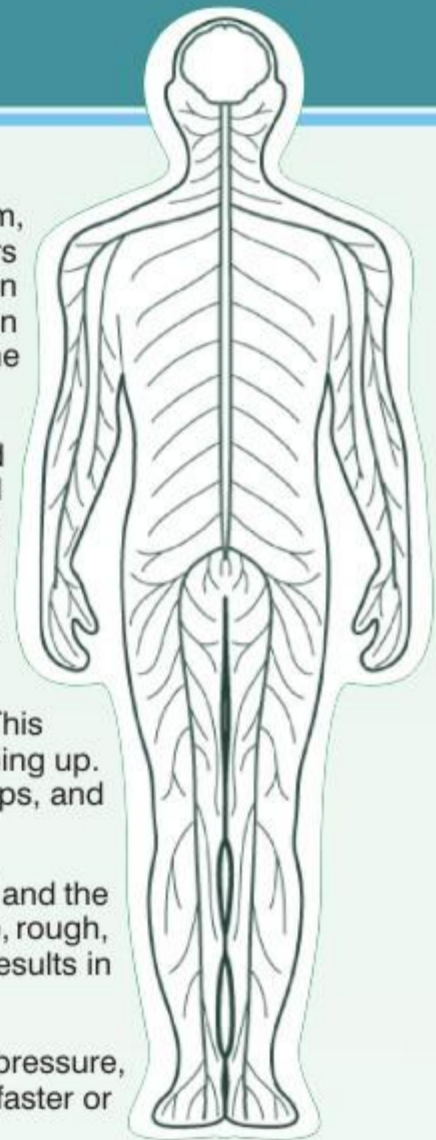
Mononeuropathy is usually the result of damage to a single nerve or nerve group by trauma, injury, local compression, prolonged pressure, or inflammation. Examples include: Carpal tunnel syndrome (a painful wrist and hand disorder often associated with repetitive tasks), and Bell's palsy (a facial nerve disorder).

The majority of people, however, suffer from polyneuropathy, an umbrella term for damage involving many nerves at the same time.

There are many causes of peripheral neuropathy, including diabetes, hereditary disorders, infections, inflammation, autoimmune diseases, protein abnormalities, exposure to toxic chemicals, poor nutrition, kidney failure, chronic alcoholism, and certain medications – especially those used to treat cancer and HIV/AIDS. In some cases, however, even with extensive evaluation, the cause of a person's peripheral neuropathy remains unknown – this is called idiopathic neuropathy.

The symptoms of peripheral neuropathy often include:

- A sensation of wearing an invisible "glove" or "sock"
- Burning sensation or freezing pain
- Sharp, jabbing or electric-like pain
- Extreme sensitivity to touch
- Difficulty sleeping because of feet and leg pain
- Loss of balance and coordination
- Muscle weakness
- Difficulty walking or moving the arms
- Unusual sweating
- Abnormalities in blood pressure or pulse



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Dadi Maa Ke Nuskhe



Home remedies

For Common Cold



- Lemon is the most important among the many home remedies for common cold. It is beneficial in all types of cold with fever. Vitamin C-rich lemon juice increases body resistance, decreases toxicity and reduces the duration of the illness. One lemon should be diluted in a glass of warm water, and a teaspoon of honey should be added to it. This should be taken once or twice daily

For Hairloss tip



- A mix of castor oil and almond oil works wonder for hairloss. Simply warm an equal amount of these oils and massage into scalp. Shampoo after 30 min. Do it twice in a week and continue using it if you like.

Riddle

1. I have holes in my top and bottom, my left and right, and in the middle. But I still hold water. What am I?
2. I never was, am always to be, No one ever saw me, nor ever will, And yet I am the confidence of all To live and breathe on this terrestrial ball. What am I?
3. All about, but cannot be seen, Can be captured, cannot be held, No throat, but can be heard. What is it?
4. I can be red or green, some people like me but some people dislikes me. For most people when they eat me... their face turns red!

Funny Bone



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