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Iron test at home

Iron is an essential mineral that your body needs for many crucial reasons, including growth and development. A lack of iron can lead to iron deficiency and too much can result in iron overload - both of which can bring with them a number of complications. How do you check iron levels from home? If you suspect you might have some symptoms of abnormal iron levels, it’s important to find out more. As there are no-known at home remedies to accurately check iron levels from home, the best way to check is with an at-home iron test. The LetsGetChecked Iron Test is a simple finger prick test which can help determine if you’re at risk of iron deficiency anemia or iron overload by identifying your iron blood levels from the comfort of your own home. Once you’ve taken the test, your online results will be available within 5 days. Indicators of iron deficiency anemia Iron deficiency anemia occurs when your body has insufficient levels of iron - this can happen if you have a disorder which inhibits your ability to absorb nutrients or you may just be consuming too little iron in your diet. Some common indicators of iron deficiency anemia include: Extreme fatigue Weakness Pale skin Chest pain, fast heartbeat or shortness of breath Headache, dizziness or lightheadedness Cold hands and feet Inflammation or soreness of your tongue Brittle nails Indicators of iron overload Iron overload, also known as haemochromatosis, occurs when your body absorbs too much iron from the food you eat. This can sometimes lead to liver disease, heart problems and diabetes. Some common indicators of iron overload include: Joint pain Abdominal pain Fatigue Weakness Diabetes Loss of sex drive Impotence Heart failure Liver failure If you’ve been experiencing symptoms of iron deficiency anemia or iron overload, it’s important to get tested - the best way to check iron levels from home is with an at-home test. You should take the LetsGetChecked Iron Test if: You’re suffering from an iron deficiency You’re suffering from hemochromatosis You’re vegetarian You frequently donate blood You’re suffering from fatigue, low energy or low mood You have a family history of hemochromatosis You’re from Northern Europe, you are more likely to suffer from hemochromatosis Close BannerThis ad is displayed using third party content and we do not control its accessibility features.Iron is one of the most important nutrients in our bodies—yet it's still one of the most common nutritional deficiencies in the world. Checking your iron levels is as easy as a simple blood test, which doesn't have to be completed at the doctor's office. The best at-home iron deficiency test your iron or ferritin levels (iron stored in your body) to provide insight on whether your current diet is up to par. Ahead discover our favorite at-home tests vetted for accuracy, timeliness, ease of use, and cost—so you can focus on how to get the most painless blood sample possible. What is an iron deficiency? You may have heard the term anemia and refer to it simultaneously as iron deficiency—but the two conditions have clinical differences.ID may be the result of either excessive blood loss or decreased absorption and storage of iron. This fine balance of iron input and output is easily disturbed by either excessive output, such as bleeding or decreased intake through a diet low in iron-rich foods.Iron is a mineral that is essential for our bodies to function. Most importantly, it is part of hemoglobin, a protein that carries oxygen throughout our body. It also is part of myoglobin, a protein that stores oxygen in muscles—which explains why fatigue is one of the leading symptoms of iron deficiency, caused by the lack of oxygen to your organs and muscles. Iron is essential for healthy brain development and growth in children as well, along with the normal functioning of various cells and hormones. A lack of iron affects the number of red blood cells carrying oxygen to essential organs like the brain and heart. Being deficient in iron can cause a myriad of symptoms and can lead to iron-deficient anemia.Blood loss through trauma, menstrual cycles, and pregnancyPoor diet low in iron-rich foodsInability to absorb iron from foods in the intestines from diseases such as celiac, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's, helicobacter pylori, and stomach surgeryTaking too many iron supplementsHemochromatosis diseaseFood is our main source of iron, and a diet sufficient in iron will typically sustain normal levels in our bodies—as long as there are no underlying issues with absorption. Foods contain two types of iron, heme and non-heme. Heme iron comes from meat, fish, and poultry. Heme iron is much more easily absorbed compared to non-heme. Non-heme iron is found in plant-based foods such as nuts, fruits, and vegetables—but at much lower levels. When diets in the U.S. became more processed, more Americans became iron deficient. The prevalence of iron-fortified foods began in 19403 as a way to combat the rise of anemia in the U.S.Low iron levels have a cascade of symptoms stemming from a basic lack of oxygen to your organs. Because iron is vital to hemoglobin, which transports oxygen to your organs, any lack of iron will slow down this process.Common symptoms of low iron:FatigueWeaknessShortness of breathTachycardia (fast heart rate)HeadacheDizziness/lightheadednessPale skinThe normal range for stored iron is based on your age and sex:Adult Males: 24 to 336 ng/mLAdult Females: 24 to 307 ng/mLPregnant Females >40 ng/mLChildren 6 months to 15 years: 7 to 140 ng/mLShould you discover that you are, in fact, iron deficient, what happens next? First, discuss the results of your at-home or traditional lab tests with your health care provider. They may need to order additional tests to discover more about your iron health and the need for iron supplementation. Iron supplementation comes in different forms, based on the root cause of your deficiency—which could be a myriad of things, including low iron intake, trouble storing iron, issues transporting iron to your organs, or a dysfunction in absorption. Depending on the determined cause, your health care provider may recommend one or more of the following actions:Increase your iron-rich food intake, especially heme ironTake an iron supplementIncreasing vitamin C intake (to assist with absorption of iron)Intravenous (IV) iron supplementsBlood transfusionsSurgery to stop any internal bleedingHow to test for iron deficiency anemia at home?While iron deficiency is extremely prevalent, iron-specific tests are not as common as other at-home tests on the market today. A true iron deficiency diagnosis will take at least an iron, ferritin, and total iron binding capacity (TIBC) test to see the full picture of how iron is being used by your body. However, at-home testing brands currently only offer ferritin tests, which is the amount of iron stored in your body.Although these tests are a convenient and less expensive starting point, ferritin testing only gives you a glimpse of how iron is stored in your body. For instance, you could be eating a diet very high in iron, but your ferritin levels are still low. If you do not complete further testing, you would assume by the low ferritin number that you are not getting enough iron, whereas in reality your body is simply not absorbing it effectively.With that being said, testing your ferritin can give you a basic understanding of how much iron your body currently has stored. The at-home tests are easy, quick, and a good starting point for discussing symptoms or concerns with your health care provider.How does an at-home test measure iron?At this time, at-home tests only offer ferritin testing. As mentioned, this is the amount of iron stored in the body. While this test alone does not diagnose a true iron deficiency, it does give a glimpse of your iron health. Formal iron testing incorporates the following lab tests:Total iron binding capacity (TIBC) test. The TIBC test checks whether there's too much or too little iron in the bloodstream. It does this by measuring the total amount of iron that can be bound by proteins in the blood.Serum iron test. This test directly measures the level of iron in the liquid portion of the blood. It checks for abnormally high or low blood iron levels.Ferritin test. The ferritin blood test checks the level of iron stored in your body.Transferrin test. This directly measures the level of transferrin in the blood. Transferrin is the protein that transports iron around the body.Transferrin saturation percentage. A calculation that reflects the percentage of transferrin that is saturated with iron.As you can see, by testing how iron is absorbed, stored, and transferred within your body, you will have a more complete illustration of your iron levels. Naturopathic doctor Erica Steele of Holistic Family Practice recommends including at least ferritin, TIBC, and transferrin saturation percentage tests to fully diagnose an iron deficiency.AccuracyThe labs used by these at-home testing companies need to be regulated by the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA). We refer to this as CLIA-certified.Turnaround timeAt-home testing is only truly convenient if it's quicker than going to a lab. We looked for tests that will offer you speedier results.CostBecause these companies do not bill your health insurance, it's important to note the charges associated with the tests. You may be able to use an HSA or FSA account to pay, but we always recommend checking with your account carrier first to confirm.Sample methodSerum iron at-home tests come in two options; finger prick (dropping blood into a vial) and blood spot (dropping blood onto a special paper testing paper.) We included options for both.Our picks for the best at-home iron deficiency tests:This is a distinct type of ferritin test, as the results are almost instant. Much like an at-home COVID-19 or urine pregnancy test, the test outcome will be visible within minutes—so there is no need to mail in your sample and wait for results. While this sounds incredibly convenient and does save you a lot of time, the disadvantage is that your result is simply labeled as "normal" or "abnormal." The test does not offer a quantitative number to show how low or high your levels are. Typically, if your iron test result is just on the cusp of abnormal, you can make small dietary changes to increase your iron levels. However, if your levels are very low you may need to take an iron supplement. It's important to speak with a doctor to get a better understanding of why your levels are low and how to proceed from there. Equally important, you would not want to start taking a significant amount of iron supplements without consulting a doctor, as too much iron can cause other issues.It's important to note that this company is based in the U.K., so its standards for "normal" may differ from the U.S. That said, this test could be another good jumping-off point if you are experiencing symptoms or concerns and want to get a better idea of whether or not you're deficient before going to see your doctor.Blood draw completed by a technicianResults available within 1 day (no mailing)Can be taken by people in the state of New YorkMust go into a Lab Corp testing locationBest at-home iron deficiency testsCollection methodBlood; blood spotCoverageDoes not bill insuranceDoes accept HSA or FSA paymentsThis is a distinct type of ferritin test, as the results are almost instant. Much like an at-home COVID-19 or urine pregnancy test, the test outcome will be visible within minutes—so there is no need to mail in your sample and wait for results. While this sounds incredibly convenient and does save you a lot of time, the disadvantage is that your result is simply labeled as "normal" or "abnormal." The test does not offer a quantitative number to show how low or high your levels are. Typically, if your iron test result is just on the cusp of abnormal, you can make small dietary changes to increase your iron levels. However, if your levels are very low you may need to take an iron supplement. It's important to speak with a doctor to get a better understanding of why your levels are low and how to proceed from there. 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As mentioned, this only gives a small window into your iron levels. This test does include a detailed instructional video outlining directions on how to perform your finger prick blood sample that is clear and concise.The brand is clear in its instructions to use the test before 9 a.m., after fasting for six to eight hours. According to the website, results will be ready any time from two to seven business days.best at-home iron deficiency testsCollection method Blood; finger prickCoverageDoes not bill insuranceDoes accept HSA and FSA paymentsQuantitative detailed report of ferritin levelsResults come through a secure portal and appGeneral recommendations based on results includedOnly tests for ferritinThe only option is to buy a 2-pack for $105This at-home ferritin test offers a detailed result report through a secure portal. The simple finger-prick sample method is quick and easy for almost any adult to conduct. Ceracreen is very transparent in explaining that the test result values are not meant for pregnant or breastfeeding mothers. If pregnant or breastfeeding, your results will still reveal an accurate level, but the test may mark them as abnormal when they actually could be normal based on your iron needs during this time. You will need to do your own research on normal levels for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers or discuss it further with your health care provider.This company does not offer any type of follow-up to discuss your results. While the company does provide general recommendations based on results, it's important to recognize that these will not be specific to you and your individual circumstances—so if you do receive abnormal results or are experiencing symptoms or concerns, it is best that you schedule an appointment with your doctor to discuss and potentially run additional tests.Who should use an at-home iron deficiency test?If you have symptoms of low iron, you might want to use an at-home test to check your ferritin levels. People who are taking an iron supplement will also want to monitor their iron levels regularly, to make sure they are not over-supplementing. Vegetarians and vegans need to pay close attention to their iron levels, in order to be sure they are consuming enough iron from non-heme sources. At-home tests are convenient and cost effective for each of these purposes. The drawback of at-home iron testing is that, at this time, the only option is to test only your ferritin levels. The total iron-binding capacity (TIBC) is another element of iron testing that is not available for home-testing, along with serum iron. Getting a full picture of iron deficiency takes more than one test—so a visit to your doctor is always recommended.Steele also points out that those who are minorities or from Indigenous backgrounds are more prone to iron deficiencies, and, if it suits their budgets, at-home testing could offer these groups access to care.FAQYes, sort of. At-home lab tests have become just as accurate as traditional labs, allowing consumers to test their iron levels from the comfort of their homes. However, these at-home tests only include ferritin tests at this time, so further lab testing will most likely be required for an official iron deficiency diagnosis. It is important to remember that symptoms also play a role in diagnosing iron deficiency. If your results reveal low ferritin levels, it's imperative to discuss possible treatment with a health care provider. Overdosing on iron supplements can be extremely harmful to your health.The short answer is no. According to endocrinologist Omayra Quijano-Vega, a person can have symptoms that pertain to the possibility of an iron deficiency, which should be further investigated with the assistance of a healthcare professional to order the correct testing. You might even need a further specialty referral to include evaluation from a hematologist specialist.If you are on TikTok, you may have heard of the coin or ring trick to diagnose an iron deficiency. The premise behind this trick is that if the coin or ring leaves a black mark on your face, you are iron deficient. Unfortunately, this viral trend is not scientifically supported, and experts presume the blackened mark is caused by either 1. A metallic object chemically reacting with makeup or 2. A mechanical remnant from the object. As mentioned, the best way to diagnose an iron deficiency is through lab testing with your doctor.Iron deficiency is the most common nutritional deficiency in the world, and your body may have an even more difficult time absorbing iron if you rely on a plant-based diet. Luckily, at-home testing accessibility has skyrocketed over the last few years—and while most companies only offer ferritin testing at this time, these at-home tests are a great foundation for taking charge of your health. We do recommend following up with a health care professional to discuss your symptoms and the need for further testing. This ad is displayed using third party content and we do not control its accessibility features. Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. 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Research has shown that iron plays a vital role in several metabolic processes, including oxygen transportation in the blood, creation of blood cells, and hormone production.There are two forms of dietary iron: heme and nonheme. Heme iron is a more absorbable form of this mineral, and it comes from animal sources, such as meat, poultry, and seafood. Nonheme iron is less absorbable and comes from plant sources and iron-fortified foods.Learn more about iron here.Consuming insufficient amounts of dietary iron can result in iron deficiency. People who menstruate, are pregnant, or are breastfeeding require more iron, so they are more likely to have iron deficiency.Certain health conditions can prevent a person from absorbing the iron that they consume, including:celiac diseaseCrohn’s diseaseduodenal cancerduodenal ulcersIron tests can check how much iron is present in the blood. The results may indicate that a person has too little, too much, or a healthy amount of this mineral.An iron test is often just one component of a general blood test, as laboratory technicians can run multiple tests on the same sample of blood.When a doctor orders an iron test, they often order several tests at a time. The combined results can help a doctor determine whether a person has low, normal, or high levels of iron in their blood.Transferrin test: This test measures the amount of transferrin, a protein that transports iron, in the blood.Serum iron test: The serum iron test measures iron levels in the liquid part of the blood.Total iron-binding capacity (TIBC) test: The TIBC test checks how well iron binds to transferrin and other proteins.Ferritin test: This test measures the amount of iron that the body stores.It is important to note that ferritin is a marker of inflammation, which is why certain conditions — such as chronic kidney disease, liver disease, cancer, and metabolic syndrome — can cause the test results to be falsely normal or elevated. Therefore, if a ferritin test shows normal levels of iron, but a person has the symptoms of iron deficiency, they should undergo further tests.Alternatively, an individual can opt for an at-home testing kit that allows to perform more than one of the tests above.What may the results mean?Iron tests will return a result that tells a person whether their iron levels are normal, low, or high.Low iron levels indicate a potential iron deficiency, whereas high levels suggest an iron overload. If an at-home test shows either condition, a person should consult a healthcare professional.Iron deficiencyIron deficiency occurs when a person does not have enough iron in their body. It can lead to iron deficiency anemia.The signs and symptoms of iron deficiency anemia include:Learn more about iron deficiency anemia here.If a person gets test results that indicate low iron levels or if they experience any symptoms of iron deficiency anemia, they should contact a doctor for further advice and treatment.Iron overloadWhen a person consumes too much iron, they are at risk of iron overload. Iron deposits increase in the liver, heart, and endocrine glands, and they can cause organ damage.Signs and symptoms of iron overload include:Iron overload can be either primary or secondary, with the primary form being more common.Primary iron overload is heritable, meaning that it can pass from parents to their children. However, a person will only experience symptoms if they receive one copy of the faulty gene from each parent.Secondary iron overload can result from excessive dietary protein consumption, long-term kidney dialysis, certain types of anemia, or chronic liver disease.Learn more about iron overload here.If test results show high iron levels or if symptoms of iron overload occur, a person should seek guidance from a doctor.Several companies sell at-home iron tests. Some tests may require a person to go to a laboratory to provide the blood sample.LetsGetChecked Iron TestBest for a comprehensive blood testLetsGetChecked provides several health-related tests for at-home use, including an iron test. This test requires a person to collect blood via a finger prick.Learn more about LetsGetChecked here.ironTIBCferritintransferrin saturationOnce a person purchases the test, they need to register it through the LetsGetChecked website. The test includes all necessary equipment and instructions. After taking a blood sample, an individual needs to return it using a prepaid envelope.LetsGetChecked states that people will receive their test results within 5 days through a secure app. If a person’s results indicate iron deficiency or iron overload, LetsGetChecked nurses will call them to discuss the next steps.LetsGetChecked accepts HSAs and FSAs.At the time of publication, LetsGetChecked Iron Test costs $99. People can receive a 30% discount by subscribing to receive an iron test every 3 months.Lab.Me Advanced Ferritin TestBest for subscribing and savingThis ferritin test measures how well the body stores iron. It uses a finger prick collection method.Lab.Me includes an instructional video that a person can watch to learn how to take their sample. Once they do, they need to send the sample to the company in a prepaid envelope.The company states that people will receive their results along with personalized reports, test recommendations, and lifestyle advice within 48 hours.Lab.Me uses CAP-accredited laboratories to process the blood samples.At the time of publication, Lab.Me Advanced Ferritin Test costs $59. People who wish to test their levels regularly can save 5% or 10% by subscribing to receive a test once every 6 or 3 months, respectively.Cerascreen Ferritin TestBest for same-day shippingThis test measures how well the body stores iron.The company states that the test is not suitable for people living with HIV or hemophilia. Moreover, individuals who are pregnant or breastfeeding should consult a doctor before using this test.Once a person orders this ferritin test, they will need to collect a blood sample with a finger prick. Then, they need to send the sample back to the company in a prepaid envelope.People can access their test results through the Cerascreen website or app.Cerascreen offers same-day shipping if a person orders before 2 p.m. EST. The company states that the average delivery time is 4–6 days.The company uses CLIA-approved laboratories to test the blood samples.At the time of publication, Cerascreen Ferritin Test has a retail price of $89.Pixel by Labcorp Ferritin Blood TestBest for fast resultsPixel by Labcorp provides a variety of at-home test kits, including one that checks ferritin levels.Learn more about Pixel by Labcorp here.If a person orders this test, they will have to visit a Labcorp laboratory with a photo ID and a requisition order. A trained technician will then take a blood sample.Pixel by Labcorp states that people will receive their test results within 2 days through its website. If a test result indicates the need for prompt attention, the company will call the person to give them advice.Pixel by Labcorp accepts HSAs and FSAs.At the time of publication, Pixel by Labcorp Ferritin Blood Test costs $38.A person should interpret their results with the help of a healthcare professional. If a blood test shows that a person’s iron levels are too high or too low, a doctor will be able to offer advice and recommend treatment options.People should also contact a doctor if they are experiencing symptoms that are worrying, even if a blood test states that their iron levels are within a healthy range.Frequently asked questionsThe following are some frequently asked questions about taking an at-home iron test:How do I use an at-home iron test?At-home test kits come with instructions on how to take a sample. People should follow the manufacturer’s instructions carefully to ensure an accurate result.Many at-home tests require the following steps:Order a kit online or at a local pharmacy.Use the provided testing materials to perform a finger prick.Collect a blood sample.Send the sample to a laboratory.Wait for the results.The company that provides the test kit will inform a person of their test results through its website or app. Some companies will offer follow-up phone calls to discuss results that reveal low or high iron levels.A person should discuss their results with a healthcare professional to receive advice and learn about any necessary treatment options.Are at-home iron tests accurate?At-home iron tests can be accurate. Users should follow all instructions to ensure that they are providing a valid sample.Some people may wish to buy at-home tests that process samples in CLIA-approved or CAP-accredited laboratories. If a company sends the samples to these laboratories, it means that the technicians follow guidelines that reduce the risk of invalid test results.Iron tests measure the amount of iron in the blood and how well the body absorbs it. The results may indicate an iron deficiency or an iron overload.At-home tests may check for similar markers to a blood test that a doctor might order.When taking an iron test at home, a person should follow all the instructions carefully and follow up with a healthcare professional if they receive abnormal results. This article needs more reliable medical references for verification or relies too heavily on primary sources. Please review the contents of the article and add the appropriate references if you can. Unsourced or poorly sourced material may be challenged and removed. Find sources: "Iron tests" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (September 2018) Medical diagnostic method Iron testsPurposeevaluate iron level Iron tests are groups of clinical chemistry laboratory blood tests that are used to evaluate body iron stores or the iron level in blood serum. Other terms used for the same tests are iron panel, iron profile, iron indices, iron status or iron studies. Serum iron Ferritin Transferrin Total iron-binding capacity (TIBC) Transferrin saturation (Iron saturation of transferrin) Unsaturated iron binding capacity (UIBC) Transferrin receptor (TfR) Complete blood count (CBC), especially: Hemoglobin, EVF or total red blood cells (RBC count) Mean corpuscular volume (MCV) Mean corpuscular hemoglobin (MCH) or MCHC IRON PANEL Serum iron Transferrin and TIBC Transferrin saturation Ferritin Transferrin receptor Related tests Hb MCV Iron deficiency anemia Iron overload (hemochromatosis) * Normal Anemia of chronic disease * * Porphyria cutanea tarda (PCT) Normal Thalassemia Sideroblastic anemia * Megaloblastic anemia Hemolytic anemia * * * * Pregnancy or use of hormonal contraception Normal * = or normal. Reference ranges for blood tests#Ions and trace metals, for reference ranges for tests above Iron Level Blood Test - Personal Home Medical Tests - testnord.co.uk Retrieved from "