

Anemia Awareness

What is anemia?

Anemia happens when you do not have enough red blood cells which can make you feel tired and weak and may cause loss of appetite.

What causes anemia?

In CKD, your kidneys don't make enough of a hormone called erythropoietin (EPO), which your body needs to make red blood cells.

How is anemia treated for people on dialysis?

Anemia is treated with extra iron and/or erythropoietin-stimulating agents (ESAs). ESAs replace the EPO that is low in people with kidney failure, so they can make red blood cells.

Does malnutrition cause anemia?

Malnutrition and anemia often go hand in hand, affecting your overall well-being. Important nutrients that contribute to making healthy red blood cells are Iron, protein, vitamin B12 and folate. Keeping this in mind when choosing meals may help your body with red blood cell production!

These foods can help you build healthy red blood cells:

Food Sources	Nutrients				
	Heme Iron (animal sources)	Non-Heme Iron (plant sources)	Vitamin C (helps with absorption of non-heme iron)	Vitamin B12 (needed to make red blood cells)	Folate (needed to make red blood cells)
Lean beef, pork	✓			✓	
Poultry	✓			✓	✓
Eggs	✓			✓	✓
Broccoli		✓	✓		✓
Green peas		✓	✓		✓
Fortified grains and cereals		✓		✓	✓
Raw Spinach		✓	✓		✓
Strawberries		✓	✓		
Raspberries		✓	✓		
Cherries		✓	✓		✓

Check with your dietitian about adding these foods to your diet. Be sure to take all medications and supplements as prescribed by your MD.