

# Many pregnancies affected by iron deficiency

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(HealthDay)—Less than half of individuals have their ferritin levels checked during pregnancy, and among those who do, half have low iron levels, according to a study published online Aug. 30 in *Blood Advances*.

Jennifer Teichman, M.D., from the University of Toronto, and colleagues used data from 44,552 pregnant [patients](#) with [prenatal testing](#) at community laboratories in Ontario, Canada, to determine the prevalence of ferritin testing over five years, as well as the prevalence and severity of iron deficiency (ID), and to identify clinical and demographic variables associated with ID screening.

The researchers found that 59.4 percent of patients had ferritin checked during pregnancy; among these patients, 71.4 percent of ferritin tests were ordered in the first trimester when the risk for ID is lowest. Lab results showed that 25.2 percent of patients were iron-insufficient (30 to 44  $\mu\text{g/L}$ ), 52.8 percent were iron-deficient ( $\leq 29 \mu\text{g/L}$ ) at least once in pregnancy, and 8.3 percent were anemic (hemoglobin

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