

Edition: May 2024

HEALTHLINE

Paramount's Monthly Magazine



“

Healthy habits are learned in the same way as unhealthy habits - through practice.

Wayne W Dyre

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Thalassemia Awareness

• Iron Rich Foods

• Myths and facts



Thalassemia is an inherited blood disorder in which the body makes an abnormal form of hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is the protein molecule in red blood cells that carries oxygen. The disorder results in excessive destruction of red blood cells, which leads to anemia.



CAUSES

Thalassemia happens when there's something wrong with the genes that make hemoglobin. You get this gene problem from your parents. If one parent has it, you might get a mild form called thalassemia minor. You might not feel sick, but you'll still carry the gene. Some people with this type do have minor symptoms. If both parents have it, you're more likely to get a serious form.

SYMPTOMS

Thalassemia symptoms can differ, but some common ones are:



Bone problems, especially in the face



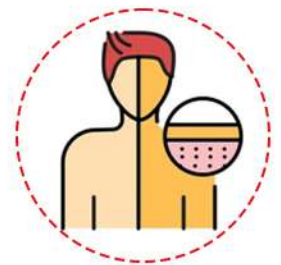
Dark urine



Slower growth and development



Feeling very tired



Skin turning yellow or pale

Not everyone with thalassemia shows symptoms. Some might not notice until later in childhood or as a teen.

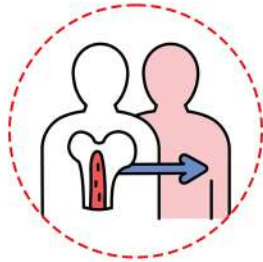
TREATMENT

Treatment for thalassemia depends on how severe it is and what type you have. Your doctor will choose the best treatment for you.

Treatments may include:



Blood transfusions



Bone marrow
transplant



Medications and
vitamins



Surgery to remove the
spleen or gallbladder

Your doctor might advise against iron-containing vitamins or supplements, especially if you're getting blood transfusions. Too much iron from transfusions can build up in your body and cause problems. If you're getting transfusions, you might also need chelation therapy. This involves getting a special injection to help remove extra iron from your body.

SOME OF THE POINTS TO NOTE ABOUT THALASSEMIA CARE IN INDIA INCLUDES:

- ▶ Thalassemia therapies are expensive and lifelong.
- ▶ Quality and safety of blood samples are crucial.
- ▶ India needs to adopt new testing technologies and screening methods.
- ▶ Access to safe blood is a right for people with disabilities.
- ▶ NAT (Nucleic Acid Testing technology) should be endorsed nationwide for safer blood screening.
- ▶ Lack of a central body complicates blood bank management.
- ▶ Only a few states have adopted NAT technology.
- ▶ Prevention is key, focusing on community awareness and ante-natal testing.
- ▶ Specialised clinics and counselling centres should be established.
- ▶ Involvement of various stakeholders is necessary for prevention plans.



IRON RICH FOODS :

In traditional Indian cuisine, there are many iron-rich foods you can include in your diet to help maintain healthy iron levels.

Some options to consider are:



Spinach: Often used in curries, soups, and as a side dish.



Lentils (dal): A staple in many Indian dishes, lentils are rich in iron and protein.



Chickpeas (chana): Commonly used in curries, salads, and snacks like chana masala.



Tofu: Used in vegetarian Indian dishes, tofu is a good source of iron.



Fenugreek leaves (methi): Used in dishes like methi paratha or added to curries for flavor and nutrition.



Pumpkin seeds (kaddu ke beej): Often added to dishes or consumed as a snack.



Black-eyed peas (lobia): Used in various dishes like lobia masala or lobia curry.



Amaranth leaves (chaulai saag): Consumed as a leafy green vegetable in dishes like saag or as a side dish.

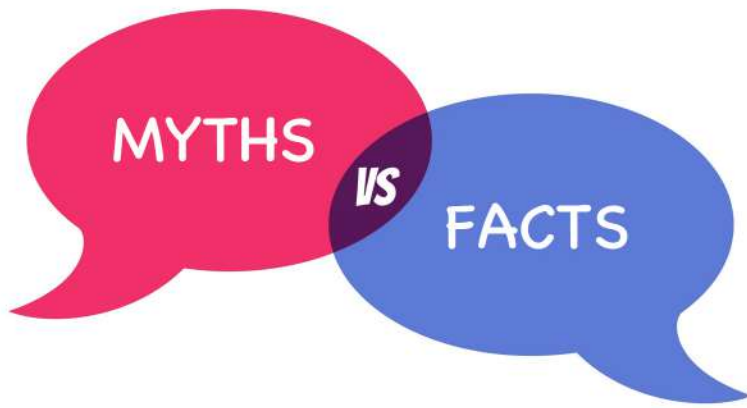


Sesame seeds (til): Added to sweets, snacks, and savory dishes for flavor and nutrition.



Jaggery (gur): A traditional sweetener in Indian cuisine, jaggery contains iron along with other minerals.

Incorporating these iron-rich foods into your diet can help you maintain adequate iron levels and support overall health.

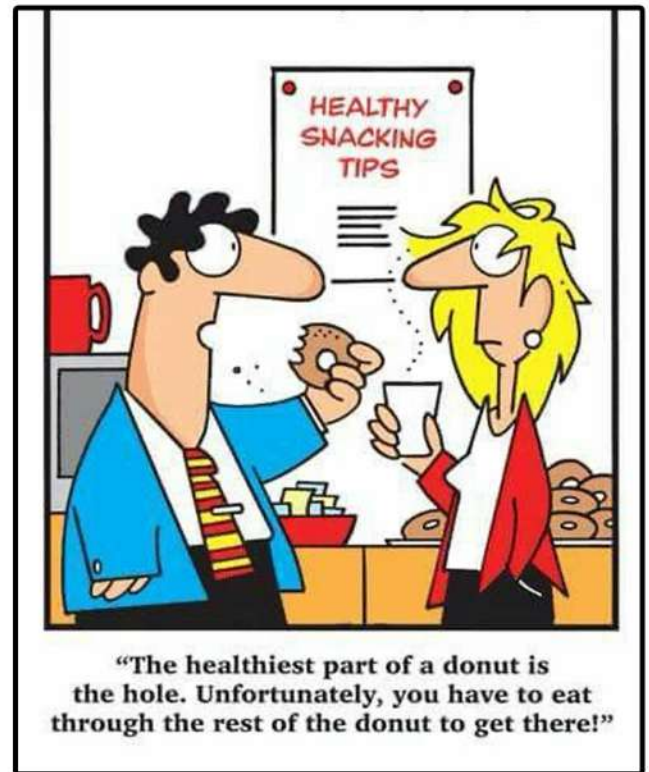


Skipping meals is a good way to lose weight

Protein is a macronutrient that is essential in building muscle mass, and our body is predominantly made of muscles. These muscles are difficult to build and can break down easily. Hence, we should avoid habits that break down these muscles.



The statement "eat less to weigh less" might seem logical to you, but the fact is just the opposite. When you skip / miss your meal, your body starts preserving the calories so that it can be used later. Skipping meals also puts your body on survival mode, where the body starts breaking proteins (muscles) to provide energy for the activities you do. It also makes you feel tired, and hungry for high calorie snacks which leads to weight gain. Maximum portion of the ingested calories tends to get stored as fats.



Tip - It is recommended to eat small servings regularly throughout the day and exercise often instead of skipping meals completely.

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