

USPSTF: evidence lacking for iron deficiency anemia screening

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(HealthDay)—The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has found that current evidence is insufficient for weighing the benefits and harms of iron deficiency screening and routine iron supplementation in pregnancy. These findings form the basis of a final recommendation statement published online Sept. 8 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Albert L. Siu, M.D., M.S.P.H., and colleagues, on behalf of the USPSTF, reviewed the evidence to update the 2006 USPSTF recommendation on screening for iron deficiency. The authors reviewed the evidence relating to the correlation between change in iron status as a result of intervention and improvement in outcomes.

The researchers concluded that the current evidence is inadequate to assess the balance of benefits and harms of iron deficiency anemia screening in [pregnant women](#) in order to prevent adverse maternal health and [birth outcomes](#) (Grade I statement). Furthermore, the current evidence is inadequate to weigh the balance of benefits and harms of routine iron supplementation to prevent adverse maternal health and birth outcomes (Grade I statement). These recommendations apply to pregnant women and adolescents living in the United States without symptoms of [iron deficiency](#) anemia.

"Today there is simply not enough high-quality evidence to make a recommendation, and we are calling for more research on [iron deficiency anemia](#) screening and iron supplementation among pregnant women," USPSTF member Francisco Garcia, M.D., M.P.H., said in a statement.

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