Oral Irons and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

What are oral irons?

- Oral irons are a group of medicines that includes ferrous sulfate, ferrous gluconate, ferrous fumarate, and FeraMAX® 150.

- Oral irons are available under many brand names and in several forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of oral iron</th>
<th>Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ferrous sulfate</td>
<td>tablet or liquid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ferrous gluconate</td>
<td>tablet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ferrous fumarate</td>
<td>tablet, capsule, or liquid</td>
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<tr>
<td>polysaccharide-iron complex</td>
<td>capsule or powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(FeraMAX® 150)</td>
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Why does someone with CKD need this medicine?

- Your red blood cells need iron to help carry oxygen through your body.

- When your body does not get enough oxygen due to lack of iron, you may feel tired or have shortness of breath.

- Many people with CKD have anemia (not enough red blood cells or hemoglobin in the blood). Taking oral irons will give you enough iron to make the oxygen-carrying part of your red blood cells. This will make sure your body gets enough oxygen.

- When you have CKD, you may not make enough EPO (erythropoietin). This causes your red blood cell count to drop and anemia to develop. Some people with CKD need a medicine called erythropoiesis-stimulating agent (ESA) to do the work of EPO.

- For ESA to work its best, you will need enough iron.
How do I take oral irons?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of oral iron</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
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<tr>
<td>ferrous sulfate</td>
<td>Swallow whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ferrous gluconate</td>
<td>DO NOT crush, chew, dissolve, or break.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ferrous fumarate</td>
<td>You may open the capsule and mix with water if you can’t swallow it whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polysaccharide-iron complex (FeraMAX® 150)</td>
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- Take 2 hours before a meal or 1 hour after a meal.
- Take at the same time every day.
- Take with food if your stomach feels upset.
- Do not miss doses. If you forget a dose, skip it. Do not take a double dose.
- Some medications can’t be taken at the same time as oral iron (e.g., Tums®). Your pharmacist can help you with timing your medications.
Are there any side effects?
The most common side effects are:
› nausea (upset stomach)
› vomiting (throwing up)
› constipation (hard to poop)
› indigestion (heartburn)
› diarrhea (loose stools)
› black stools

How should I store this medicine?
• Store it at room temperature and away from damp areas like the bathroom.
• Store it out of children’s reach.

This pamphlet is just a guide. Please talk to your health care provider about your questions. We are here to help you.
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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.