

RUCHI GURNANI · NUTRITIONIST

7 days to warm hands



Not gloves. Iron. Seven days of plates that put iron in, and the habits that stop it leaking out.

Swipe 👉

Read this first

Cold hands and feet when the room is fine for everyone else usually means the blood is short of iron. Less iron, less heat. Every second Indian woman is there and does not know it.

Before Day 1, **get a ferritin test.**

Haemoglobin can look normal while the iron store is empty. Ferritin sees the store.

Iron from dal, sabzi and grains gets in slowly. So this plan does two things every day: **put iron on the plate**, and **stop the things that block it.**

THE ONE RULE

No chai or coffee for one hour after any meal. Tea with lunch cuts the iron from that lunch by a third. If you keep only one page, keep this.

1

THE KADHAI SWAP

- MORNING** Buy or dig out a **loha kadhai** (plain iron, not non-stick). Season it: heat, wipe with oil, cool.
- LUNCH** Palak, methi or any leafy sabzi cooked in it. The food picks up iron from the pan. A tomato in the sabzi pulls out more.
- CHAI** One hour after lunch, not with it. Set an alarm for the first week.
- SNACK** A fistful of roasted chana at 4 pm instead of biscuits.

WHY THE KADHAI

In a one-year trial, children fed food cooked in iron pots built more blood than children fed from aluminium pots. Cheapest iron supplement there is.

2

SPROUT DAY

**NIGHT
BEFORE**

Soak a katori of **sabut moong**. In the morning drain, cover with a damp cloth, leave till evening. Tails appear.

BREAKFAST

Moong chilla, or the sprouts steamed with nimbu and onion. Sprouting frees the iron that dry dal locks up.

LUNCH

Rajma or chana. A katori, not a spoon. Squeeze nimbu over it, the sour helps the iron get in.

AVOID

Milk with the meal. Calcium and iron fight for the same door. Curd after the meal is fine, a glass of milk with it is not.

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THE VITAMIN C PAIR

- RULE** Every iron food gets a sour friend on the plate. Nimbu, tomato, amla, capsicum, guava.
- BREAKFAST** Poha with peanuts and a lot of nimbu. Or an amla with the sprouts.
- LUNCH** Chole with tomato and nimbu. Add kaddu ke beej on top, the seeds carry iron too.
- DINNER** Dal with a spoon of ghee and a squeeze of nimbu. Guava after.

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THE B12 DAY

- WHO** Cold plus pins and needles or numb feet is B12, not iron. Vegetarians run out first. Metformin and acidity tablets drain it too.
- EVERY DAY** One of these: two eggs, a katori of curd, 50 g paneer, a glass of milk between meals. Plants do not carry B12.
- PARENTS** Over 50 and on acidity pills for years? Ask the doctor for a B12 test with the ferritin.
- VEGAN** Food will not cover it. A B12 supplement, ask your doctor for the dose.

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THE THYROID CHECK

- SIGNS** Cold plus weight going up, dry skin, hair thinning, tired all day, periods off. That pattern is thyroid, and diet alone will not fix it.
- TEST** Ask for TSH along with ferritin and B12. One draw, three answers.
- IODINE** Iodised salt, normal amounts. Do not switch to pink or sea salt for the whole family, they carry no iodine.
- IF ON TABLETS** Take the thyroid tablet on an empty stomach, chai and breakfast 30 to 60 minutes later. Iron tablets four hours away from it.

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THE BLOOD FLOW DAY

- COFFEE** Fingers going white or blue in the cold? Caffeine narrows the small blood vessels. Two cups a day, none after 4 pm.
- SMOKING** The single biggest thing narrowing blood flow to the fingers. Stop, or this plan fights uphill.
- MOVE** A ten-minute walk after lunch and dinner. Moving muscle pulls warm blood to the hands.
- STRESS** Cold hands before a meeting is stress, not iron. Five slow breaths out, longer than in.

SEE A DOCTOR

Fingers turning white then blue then red, only on one side, or with joint pain or rashes. That needs a doctor, not a plate.

7

THE WEEK, AND THE NEXT 12

KEEP Kadhai twice a week. Chai an hour after meals. Sprouts or rajma or chana at one meal every day. Nimbu on it. One B12 food a day.

TABLETS Ferritin low on the test? Iron tablets from the doctor, taken with nimbu pani, never with chai, milk or an acidity pill.

THREE MONTHS New blood takes about 90 days to build. Warm hands come back before the test does. Repeat the ferritin at 3 months.

STILL COLD? Iron and B12 normal, thyroid normal, still cold: go back to the doctor. It is not the plate.

FOR LIFE

Kadhai, chai gap, sour with the dal. Three habits, no cost. That is the whole plan.

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