

Media Release



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Study findings show benefits of being Iron Women

The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC) welcomes results from a recent study¹ showing that daily iron supplementation may significantly boost exercise performance for women.

The study, a meta-analysis of 22 randomised controlled trials and published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, found iron supplements were associated with increases in oxygen consumption (VO2 max) and a lower heart rate at both maximal and sub-maximal exercise efforts.

The findings indicated that prevention of iron deficiency could improve performance in female athletes who compete in a wide range of sports that need either or all of endurance, maximal power output and strength.

“Perhaps not surprisingly, the benefits were found to be most pronounced in iron-deficient women and in trained women,” said Mr Carl Gibson, Chief Executive Officer of the CHC.

“The authors noted that iron deficiency is a risk for many women of reproductive age; and in particular a risk for female athletes due to diets deficient in iron, increased iron losses, and reduced absorption of iron from subclinical inflammation.”

Iron is an essential mineral that is involved in various bodily functions, including transporting oxygen around the body. A deficiency of iron can lead to fatigue, tiredness, anaemia and decreased immunity.

“Anyone who is concerned about their iron levels should speak to their healthcare professional.”

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As the peak industry body in Australia for vitamins, minerals and supplements, the CHC represents an industry that is devoted to improving the health of the Australian community through the promotion of sustainable health and wellbeing.

¹ Pasricha, S.R., Low, M., Thompson, J., Farrell, A., De-Regil, L.M. (2014) Iron Supplementation Benefits Physical Performance in Women of Reproductive Age: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Nutrition*.

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