

Table 2: Iron Preparations available in the Atlantic Provinces.

One preparation is not preferred over another; patient tolerance should be the guide. The usual pediatric oral dose for treatment is 3-6 mg elemental iron/mg/day (usually given in divided doses). Therapeutic doses range depending on severity of symptoms, ferritin levels, age of the patient, and gastrointestinal side effects.

Iron salt	Formulation (elemental iron)	Incidence of Adverse Reactions	Therapeutic Considerations	Cost
Oral Formulations				
Adverse GI reactions may include: nausea, vomiting, dyspepsia, constipation, dark stools, bloating				
<b>Ferrous sulfate</b> (generics, Fer-in-Sol®, Ferodan®, Pediafer®, Jamp-ferrous sulfate®)	Tablets 300 mg (60 mg Fe)	+++	Needs acid in the stomach to get absorbed. Take on an empty stomach – at least 1 hours before or 2 hours after eating, with orange juice or Vitamin C Absorption may be decreased if taking antacids or medications that reduce stomach acid.	\$10/100 tablets
	Drops 75 mg/mL (15 mg Fe/mL)	++		\$24/50 mL
	Suspension 30mg/mL (6 mg Fe/mL)	++		\$24/250 mL
<b>Ferrous gluconate</b> (generics)	Tablet 300 mg (35 mg Fe)	++		\$10/100 tablets
<b>Ferrous fumarate</b> (generics, Palafer®)	Tablet 300 mg (100 mg Fe)	++		\$16/30 tablets
	Suspension 300 mg/5 mL (20 mg Fe/mL)	+		\$15/100mL
<b>Polysaccharide iron</b> (generics, Feramax®)	Polysaccharide iron capsules 150 mg (50 mg Fe)	+	Taken with or without food Does not need acid in the stomach to get absorbed. Good choice if taking medications that reduce stomach acid. Capsule can be opened and contents mixed into water or sprinkled over soft food Virtually tasteless	\$30/30 capsules
	Powder 60 mg/teaspoon (60 mg Fe/teaspoon)	+		\$45/100 grams
<b>Heme iron polypeptide</b> (generics, Proferrin®)	11 mg heme Fe	+	Very easily absorbed. Take with or without food. Does not need acid in the stomach to get absorbed. Good choice if taking medicines that reduce stomach acid. Do not take if allergic to cow products.	\$90/90 tablets

- 1) Treatment with oral iron may take as long as 6 to 8 weeks in order to fully ameliorate the anemia, and as long as 6 months to replenish iron stores.
- 2) Prices are estimates as of October 2020.
- 3) Iron absorption may be decreased by antacids or supplements containing aluminum, magnesium, calcium, zinc, proton pump inhibitors, and histamine 2 receptor antagonists.