



NATIONAL POLICY GUIDELINE ON COMBINED IRON AND FOLIC ACID (IFA) SUPPLEMENTATION
FOR PREGNANT MOTHERS IN KENYA

Purpose of IFA supplementation

To reduce maternal anaemia, risks of low birth weight, neural tube defects in pregnancy and improve overall pregnancy outcomes

Supplementation Composition of Combined tablet/capsule	Iron - 60mg Folic acid : 400ug(o.4 mg)
Frequency	One daily
Duration	From conception to delivery
Target Group	All pregnant women
Type of supplements	They are in tablets or capsule form and may appear in different colours
Administration	Should be taken with meals

Possible side effects and Recommended Action to take should side effects occur

Possible side effect	Recommended action to take
1. Effect on gastrointestinal tract	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Epigastric pain, nausea, diarrhea or constipation may be experienced.• Faeces may turn black due to unabsorbed iron	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid taking high dose vitamin C supplements together with IFA tablet.• Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables• Emphasize that IFA supplement should be taken with meals• This is not harmful and IFA supplementation should continue
2. Inhibiting drug absorption	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Iron preparations inhibit the absorption of tetracyclines, sulphonamides and trimethoprim.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withhold IFA supplementation until treatment is completed.

Note: IFA Supplementation should be part of Focused Antenatal Care (FANC) and mothers should be encouraged to visit their nearest health facility every month.

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