The Lucky Iron Fish: a simple solution for iron deficiency

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Abstract

Iron deficiency anemia, found in both the developed and developing world, is the most common cause of anemia. Despite efforts over the last 25 years to reduce the prevalence of iron deficiency anemia, the number of years lived with disability as a result of this condition has increased. Iron deficiency anemia presents with a range of signs and symptoms, from fatigue and an inability to concentrate at work or at school to permanent stunting and impairment of cognitive development to serious complications in pregnancy and childbirth. In addition to the negative health impacts, iron deficiency is estimated to result in a loss of US \$70 billion in the global economy each year. Technically, treating iron deficiency anemia should be simple; diversifying the diet or supplementing the diet with iron will alleviate the condition. However, for many people, access to varied diets is neither affordable nor possible, and supplements are expensive, not consistently available, and often culturally unacceptable. In addition, supplementation programs rely mostly on government programs for support and are not sustainable. The Lucky Iron Fish is a simple solution to this complex problem. Based on the age-old concept that food cooked in an iron pot will absorb iron leached from the pot, the iron fish is an ingot designed to deliver a standard amount of iron that can be absorbed by the body when it is used as directed during the cooking process. Clinical tests have shown that daily use of the Lucky Iron Fish can restore circulating and stored levels of iron and reduces the prevalence of anemia by ~43%.

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Conflict-of-interest disclosure: G.R.A. is the founder and chief executive officer of Lucky Iron Fish, Inc., and has equity in Lucky Iron Fish, Inc.

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