Iron has both a storage pool and a functional pool. Iron deficiency can be absolute (the body’s iron store is empty) or functional (when the release of iron is compromised).

### CAUSES OF IRON DEFIENCY:

- **Reduced absorption**
  - AI gastritis
  - Bariatric surgery
  - PPIs
  - Anti-H₂
  - H pylori
  - Hookworm
  - Infection
  - Bleeding
  - Oedema
  - Coeliac disease

- **Inadequate intake**
  - Vegetarian/vegan diet
  - Malnutrition

- **Increased body needs**
  - Infants/preschoolers
  - Pregnancy
  - EPO treatment
  - Elite athletes

- **Chronic blood loss (without anaemia)**
  - GI cancers
  - Donations
  - Heaves menses
  - NSAIDs
  - Haematuria
  - Coagulopathy
  - Steroids

- **Having certain chronic diseases***
  - Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)
  - Chronic heart failure
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - Celiac disease

*block iron transporters and reduce iron absorption, causing functional iron deficiency.

**References:**