

Link between iron deficiency and depression

Nutrition, menstruation, depression and anaemia are interlinked. Arli Zarate Ortiz of the Human Nutrition and Health chair group discovered this in her PhD research on depression in teenage girls in Mexico. The onset of menstruation is regularly accompanied by the start of symptoms of depression and anaemia. Depression can be associated with iron deficiency, which may be caused by the loss of blood during menstruation. But obesity plays a role too. Poor nutrition can lead to obesity, but also to a lack of iron due to the inflammations caused by obesity. Furthermore, girls who start menstruating early are at greater risk of obesity. A Western diet, an unvaried vegetarian diet and unfamiliarity with the symptoms of iron deficiency also play a role, thinks the researcher.

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