



## Title: Effects of iron deficiency on the ovarian cycle

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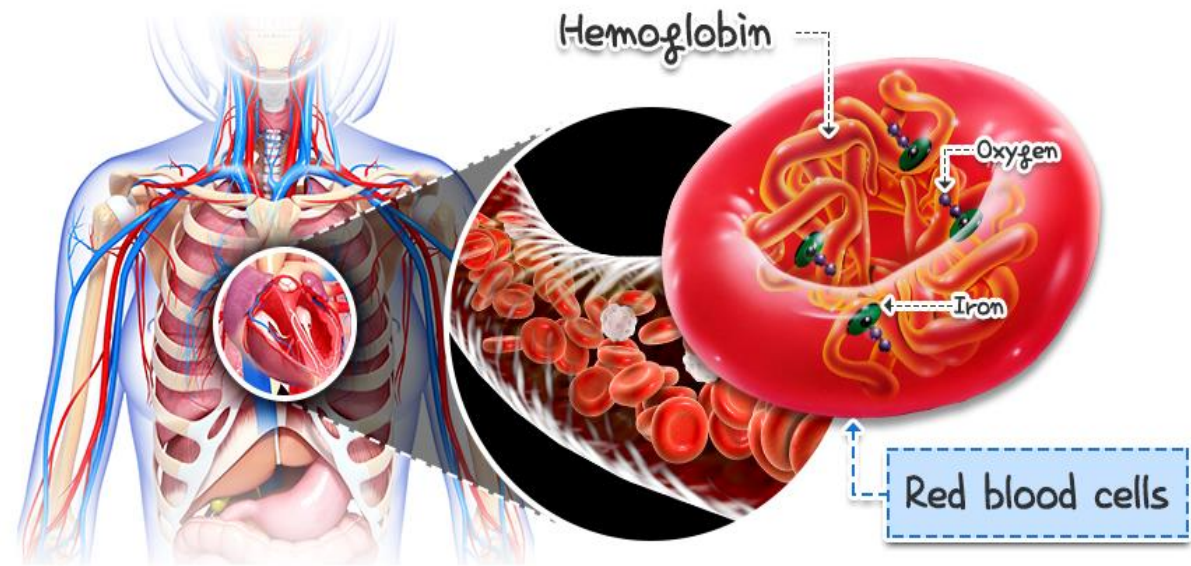
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# Introduction

Iron is a vital trace element involved in more than 400 chemical reactions and is a structural component of several proteins and enzymes. It is even an indispensable cofactor for hormone synthesis, forming the heme group of cytochromes necessary for the structure of steroid hormones. It has been experimentally demonstrated that iron deficiency anemia alters the ovarian cycle; however, it is not known whether iron deficiency can alter the ovarian cycle without reaching the anemia level.



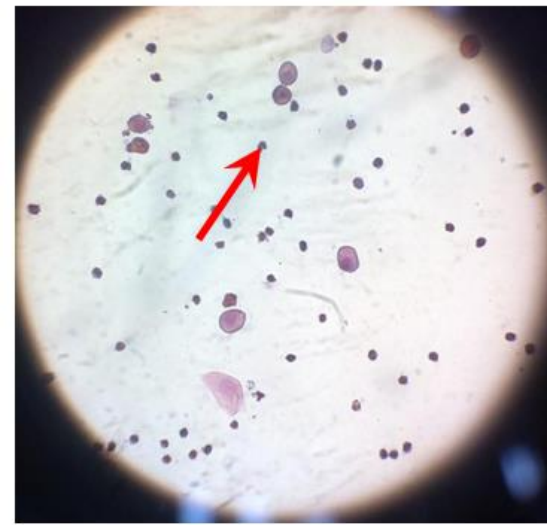
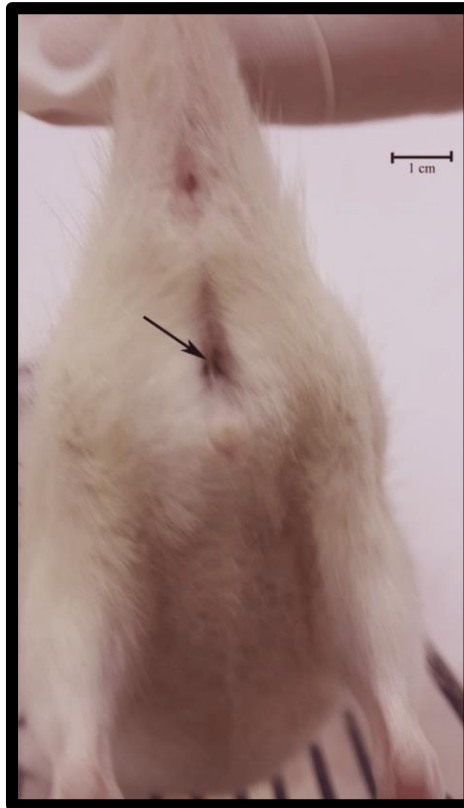
# Methodology

## GROUPS AND DIET

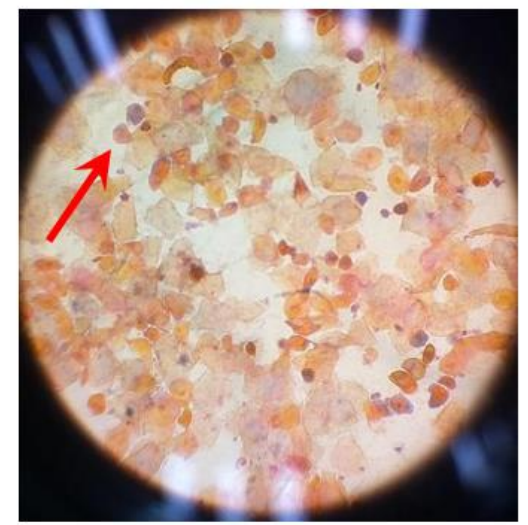
Iron-deficient diet (10 ppm FeSO<sub>4</sub>  
(AIN-76W/10 laboratory diet)  
n=10 offsprings (0 PND) – 70  
PND (adult age)

Control diet (100 ppm FeSO<sub>4</sub>  
(AIN-76W/100 laboratory diet)  
n =10 offsprings (0 PND) – 70  
PND (adult age)

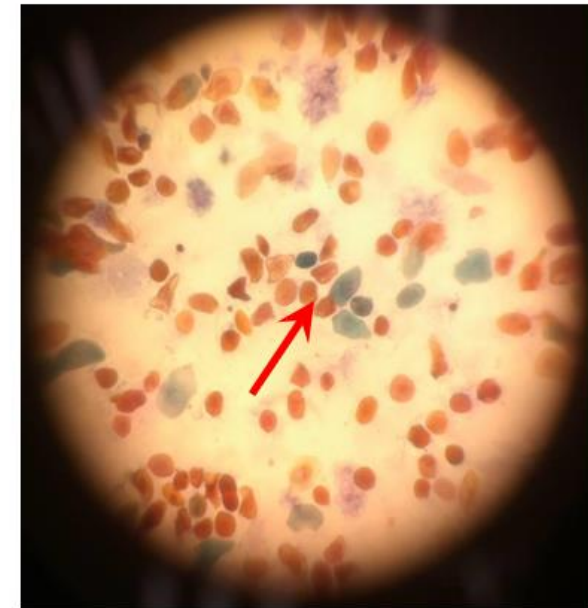
Sample to exfoliative  
cytology at 70 PND



**METESTRUS/DIESTRUS STAGE.**  
*Predominance of leukocytes*



**ESTRUS STAGE.**  
*Predominance of squamous cell*

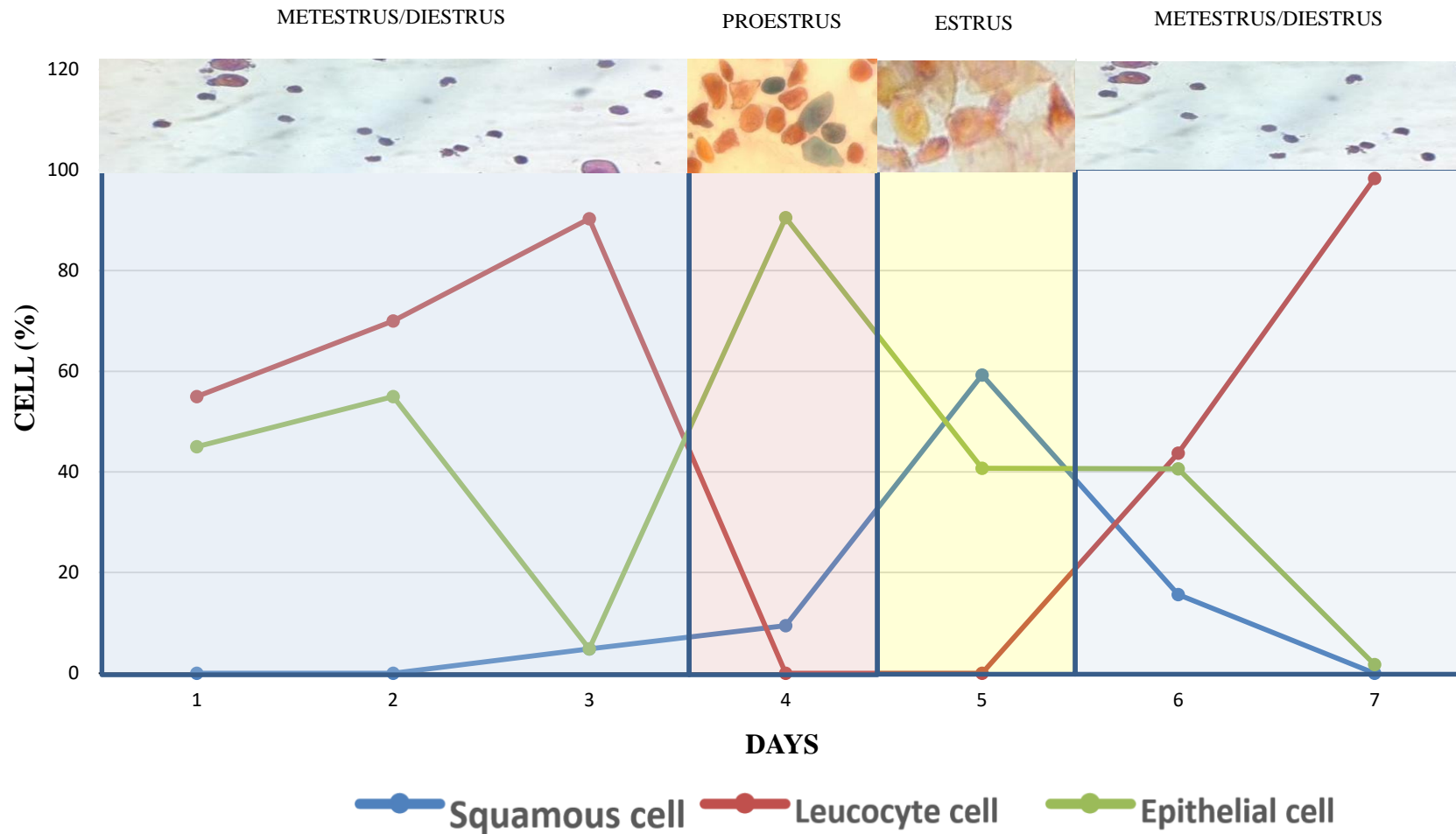


**PROESTRUS STAGE.**  
*Predominance of epithelial cells.*

**Figure 1.** *Typical cell patterns that are seen during the ovarian cycle.*

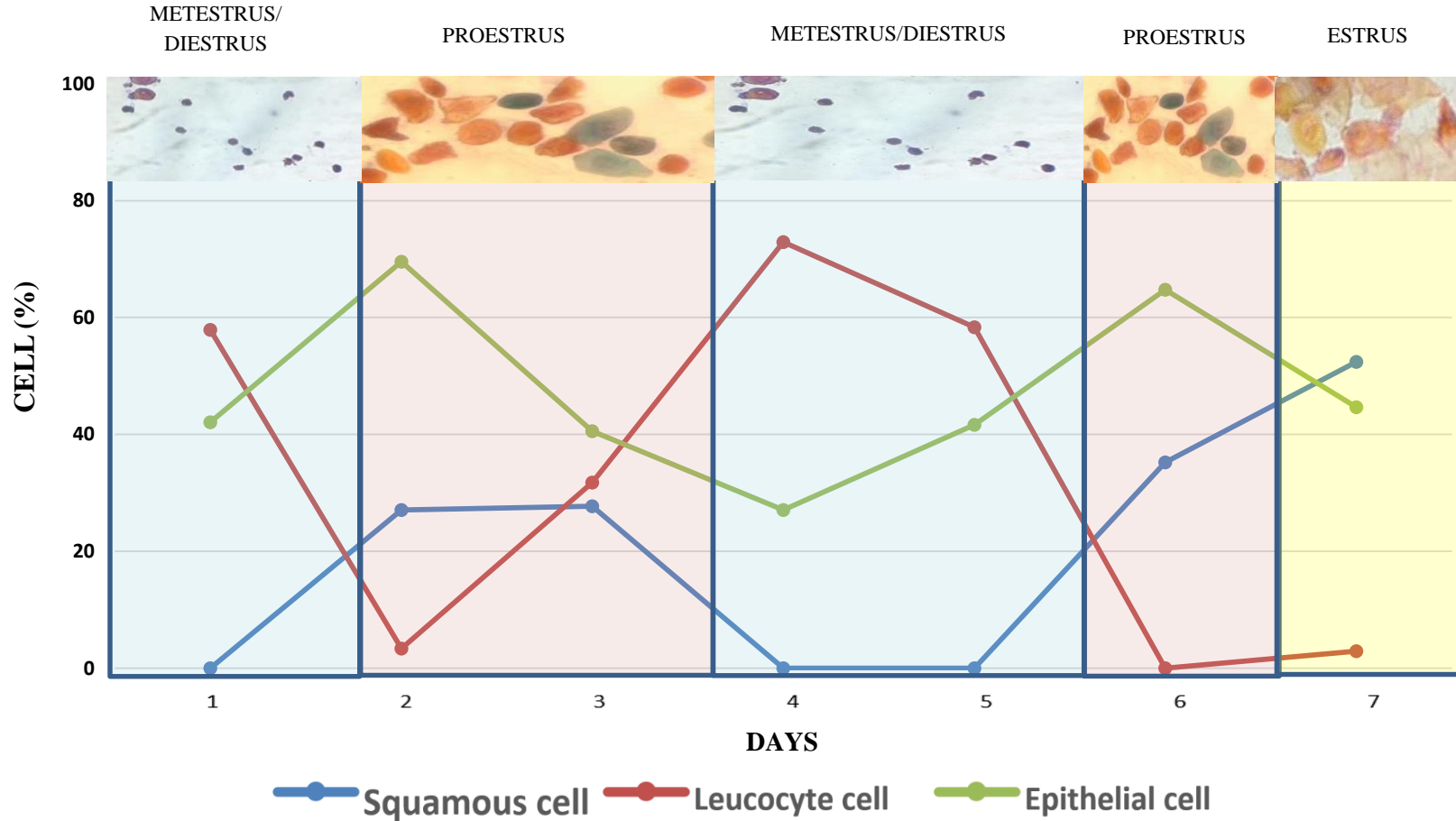
# Results

## CONTROL GROUP



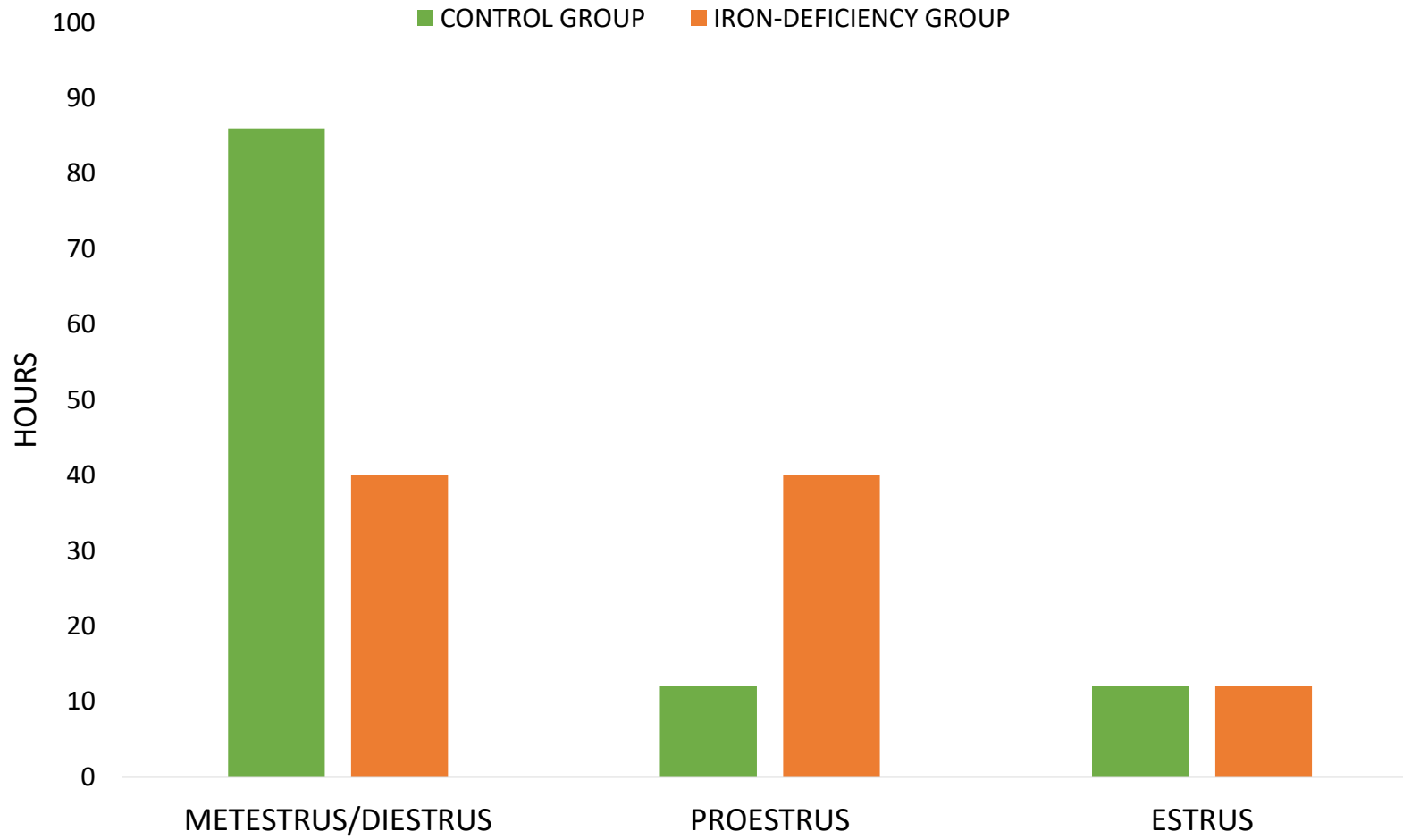
**Graph 1.** *Cell percentage obtained by exfoliative cytology in rats from the control group.*

## IRON-DEFICIENCY GROUP



**Graph 2.** *Cell percentage was obtained by exfoliative cytology in rats from the iron deficient-group.*

# OVARIAN CYCLE STAGES' AVERAGE LENGHT



**Graph 3.** *Duration of the metestrus/diestrus (shortening) and proestrus (lengthening) stages in the study groups.*

# Conclusions

Due to changes in the length of the ovarian cycle's stages, iron deficiency shortens the metestrus/diestrus phase's duration and lengthens the proestrus, which may affect fertility.



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