

14 March 2019

**Letter to the editor**

If you're celebrating 'a touch of the Irish' in your blood on St Patrick's Day, spare a thought for whether this means you are pumping too much iron.

People of Celtic origin are more likely to have the iron overload condition haemochromatosis which is the most common genetic disorder in Australia. About one in 200 people are genetically predisposed to it and one in seven are carriers.

The good news is that early detection means haemochromatosis is no barrier to a normal life and the condition is easily managed through blood donations. But when undetected and untreated, it can cause organ/tissue damage and perhaps premature death.

So as you raise a glass to your heritage this year, vow to find out more about the 'Celtic curse' from your GP or by visiting [www.ha.org.au](http://www.ha.org.au)

Yours sincerely  
Dr Dianne Prince  
President, Haemochromatosis Australia