

Iron

- Your body better absorbs iron from animal foods, such as meat, than iron from plant foods, like cereals.
- Mixing a small amount of meat in with a food from the bread/cereals group or vegetables group will improve the body's ability to take in iron from these foods. Example: ham in split pea soup, hamburger with rice in a casserole, etc.
- Cooking high acid foods, like tomatoes in spaghetti sauce or chili, in a cast iron pot increases the iron content of the food.
- Include Vitamin C-rich foods at your meals. This is a nutrient that helps your body use iron better. Vitamin C-rich foods include: Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Red or Green Peppers, Cantaloupe, Orange and Grapefruit juices. Oranges, Strawberries, Tangerines, Watermelon, and Vitamin C-rich fruit juices.
- The tannins in tea bind iron and keep it from being absorbed. So drink tea 1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal.

Where Do You Get Iron?

Few foods are really excellent sources of iron. Many foods, except foods in the milk group, give us small amounts of iron.

Rich in Iron: 4 mg or more per serving	Very High in Iron: 2.5 to 4 mg per serving	High in Iron: 1 to 2.5 mg per serving
2 oz. Liver 2 oz. Beef heart 3 oz. Lean meat 1 cup chili con carne 1 cup cooked dry beans ½ cup fortified cereal (label says 100% USRDA per 1 oz.) 2 oz. Oysters ½ cup clams	3 oz. Hamburger patty 1 cup cooked dry lentils and split peas 2 oz. Liverwurst ½ cup fortified cereal (label says 45% USRDA per 1 oz.) 3 oz. Sardines 1 cup cooked chard 1 cup cooked spinach 3 oz. Shrimp	½ oz. Prune juice 3 oz. Tongue ½ cup peanuts and other nuts 3 oz. Fish, like tuna 10 halves, dried apricot 1 egg ½ cup dried prunes, cooled ½ cup raisins 1 cup bean soup 1 cup clam chowder 1 cup cooked broccoli 1 cup cooked asparagus 1 cup cooked collards 1 cup cooked Kale 1 large dill pickle 1 cup tomato soup 1 cup cooked enriched rice 1 cup cooked oatmeal macaroni, spaghetti, noodles 2 slices of bread 3 oz. Salmon 1 Tbsp. Blackstrap molasses 1 cup green peas ¼ cup sunflower seeds 1 cup Campbell's Chunky Soup 2 sausage links 1 cup sauerkraut.

What Does Iron Do For You?

It helps prevent Iron Deficiency Anemia. Anemia makes you feel tired, irritable, pale, short of breath, and causes a poor appetite. It can result from heavy blood loss, frequent pregnancies, being premature for an infant, or a poor diet.

How Much Iron Do You Need?

The most recent recommendations of the National Research Council for daily iron intake are:

Non-pregnant teenage girls and women.....	18 mg iron
Pregnant or breast-feeding girls and women.....	18 mg iron*
*plus prenatal supplement	
Infants, 1-12 months.....	10-15mg
Children, 1-3 years.....	15mg
Children, 4-10 years.....	10mg
Men and older Women.....	10mg

