



Get the Iron You Need

When you are pregnant, you need more iron

Your body uses iron every day. So every day you need more iron. You need iron to make red blood cells. This keeps you and your baby healthy. When you don't get enough iron, your baby has a higher chance of being born too early or too small. Eat iron rich foods and take a prenatal vitamin and mineral pill with iron every day.

Eat iron rich food and iron helpers. Which ones do you like?

- Highest iron sources: animal foods
 - Shellfish: clams, oysters (cooked)
 - Beef, pork, lamb
 - Chicken, duck
 - Fish, shrimp
 - Organ meats (no more than one time per week)

- Other iron rich foods-absorbed best when combined with animal foods
 - WIC-approved cereals
 - Lentils, beans, peas (dry or canned)
 - Dark green, leafy vegetables: spinach, swiss chard and collards
 - Iron fortified instant cereals
 - Blackstrap molasses
 - Pumpkin and squash seeds
 - Prune juice, dried fruit
 - Tomato paste
- Add iron helpers to your meal
 - Fruits with vitamin C: citrus, cantaloupe, strawberry, kiwi, mango, papaya
 - Vegetables with vitamin C: tomato, broccoli, cauliflower, bell peppers, chili peppers, cabbage
 - Vitamin C rich juices: orange, grapefruit, tomato, lemon/ lime (limit juices to no more than one half to one cup per day)
 - Cook in cast iron skillet and pans to get more iron

Eating the high iron way: Choose meat, other iron rich foods and iron helpers as part of your meals and snacks.



TAKE ACTION

Your ideas for eating the high iron way:
