

How Much Iron Am I Getting?

In the list below, foods with the most iron per serving are at the top. The foods at the bottom of the list have less iron. But, they are still good iron sources.

Tip: Your body uses the iron in meat foods better than the iron in non-meat foods. Help your body use iron by eating some meat or a food that has vitamin C at the same time as a food that has iron. For example, eat tomatoes with beans or cereal with strawberries.

Amount of Iron in Some Good Iron Foods

Iron Food	Serving Size	Approximate Iron Contents (mg)	My Serving Size/Day	My Iron Intake (mg)
Clams, canned, drained	3 oz.	24		
WIC-approved cereals, dry	50g (about 2 oz.)	At least 14		
Oysters, cooked	3 oz.	10		
Organ meats: liver/giblets	3 oz.	5-10		
Fortified instant cereals, cooked	1 packet	5-8		
Cowpeas (blackeye peas), cooked	1 cup	4		
Beans, cooked (pinto, kidney, garbanzo, lima, navy, white)	1/2 cup	2-4		
Chili with meat and beans	1 cup	3		
Lentils, cooked	1/2 cup	3		
Tofu, firm	1/2 cup	3		
Spinach, cooked, drained	1/2 cup	3		
Ground beef, 15% fat, cooked	3 oz.	2		
Prune juice	3/4 cup	2		
Rice/pasta, cooked	1 cup	1-2		
Chicken, turkey	3 oz.	1		
Tuna, canned in water	3 oz.	1		
Salmon, cooked	3 oz.	1		
Corn or flour tortillas	1 tortilla	1		
Bread, enriched	1 slice	1		
Dried fruit (apricots, apples, plums)	About 10 pieces	1		
Peanut butter	2 Tbsp.	1		
Egg	1	1		

Enter total here →

Iron Recommendations			
Age	9-13 Years	14-18 Years	19-30 Years
Females	8 mg	15 mg	18 mg
If pregnant	8 mg	27 mg	27 mg
If breastfeeding	8 mg	10 mg	9 mg
Males	8 mg	11 mg	8 mg

Amount of iron I need for my age and pregnancy or breastfeeding status

 mg

Amount of iron I am getting now

 mg

How much more iron I need each day

 mg

My Action Plan for Iron



Name: _____

Check the box for each step you are doing now to eat enough iron. Check the boxes for the steps you plan to take. Write down other ways you plan to improve your iron intake.

Things that I can do to get enough iron every day

- Add one serving of vegetables such as broccoli or romaine lettuce to my diet most days of the week.
- Try a breakfast cereal that has been approved for WIC. These cereals have iron added to them.
- To find cereals approved for WIC, visit www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Pages/WIC-AuthorizedFoodListWAFL.aspx.
- Tip: Look for the WIC logo in the cereal aisle at the store. Some stores label foods approved for WIC.
- Eat an orange or another citrus fruit with my iron-rich foods.
- Try a fruit or vegetable from the iron-rich food list that I have never tried before.
- Add one serving of black beans, pinto beans, garbanzo beans or lentils to my diet most days of the week.
- My ideas for improving my iron intake:

Am Doing	Steps I Will Take
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Iron Tips

1 Eat foods that are good sources of iron every day.

- Just eating a little meat with other foods can increase the iron your body can get from foods. For example, try putting a small amount of meat into your cooked beans. Meat is an “iron helper” -- it helps your body use the iron from other foods.
- If you are a vegetarian, eat beans often.
- When preparing dry beans, soak beans for several hours in cold water before you cook them. Pour off the water and use new water to cook the beans. Your body will take in more iron this way.



2 Eat vitamin-C foods with iron-rich foods to help your body use iron better.

- Eat foods rich in vitamin C together with iron-rich foods. Vitamin-C foods are “iron-helpers” too. For example, eat an orange or strawberries with your breakfast cereal or have some salsa on your taco.
- Cook vitamin-C foods and iron-rich foods together. For example, cook your beans with tomatoes or chilies.
- For more examples of Vitamin-C and iron-rich foods, see *Iron Tips—Take Two*.

3 Coffee, tea and sodas may block iron from getting into your body.

- If you drink coffee or tea (including decaffeinated), drink them between meals.

4 Cook foods in cast-iron skillets, pots or pans to add extra iron to your food.

5 Follow your medical provider’s recommendation about multivitamins or prenatal vitamins. They have extra iron that you may need.

Iron Tips—Take Two!

Iron Helpers:

Foods rich in vitamin C
or meats



+

Foods rich in iron



= Your body
uses *more*
iron!

Foods rich in vitamin C

Vegetables

- Tomato
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Bell pepper
- Chili peppers
- Cabbage

Fruits

- Oranges
- Cantaloupe
- Grapefruit
- Strawberry
- Kiwi
- Mango
- Papaya

Juices

- Orange
- Grapefruit
- Tomato
- Lemon/lime

Foods rich in iron

Meats

- Organ meats (liver, giblets); **no more than once a week**
- Beef
- Duck
- Lamb
- Shrimp
- Fish
- Shell fish, such as clams and oysters

Non-Meats

- WIC-approved cereals
- Fortified instant cereals
- Soybeans
- Pumpkin/squash seeds
- Dry beans, cooked
- Lentils
- Spinach
- Dark green leafy vegetables, such as collard and spinach
- Eggs
- Bread/tortillas
- Rice/pasta
- Tomato paste
- Prune juice
- Dried fruit

Read food labels!

Iron is added to many foods. Look for food labels that say “enriched” or “fortified.” Some foods that may have extra iron are bread, rice, tortillas, cereals, and pasta.

Vitamin C is added to some foods because we need to have it every day. Look for labels that say “added vitamin C.” Juices are a good example of a vitamin C enriched product. Check the label to see if each serving has 50% or more of the vitamin C that you need. Juice is high in natural sugar.

Limit juice intake to ½-1 cup per day.

! Avoid buying “fruit drinks” and other sweetened drinks that are high in sugar. Look for labels that say “100% juice.”

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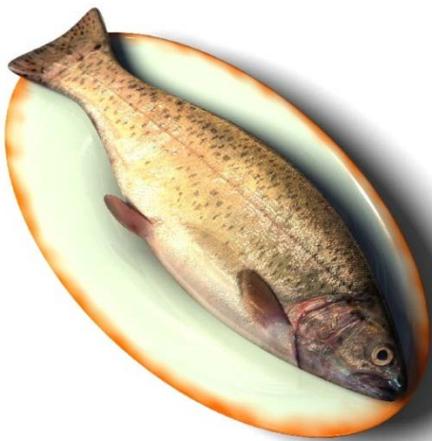
Why Do I Need Iron?

Iron is a mineral found in some foods. If you do not eat enough foods high in iron each day, you may:

- Look pale, feel tired, and act cranky
- Not feel like eating
- Have headaches and get sick more easily
- Have trouble learning and do poorly in school or work

If you are pregnant, your baby could be born too small or too soon.

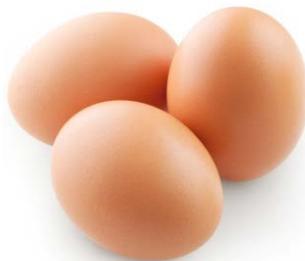
Look at the pictures below for examples of foods with iron.



Fish, chicken or other lean meats



Cooked dry beans



Egg yolks



Fortified cereals, such as WIC cereal



Dark green leafy vegetables