

How Much Iron Do You Need?

- Birth–6 months: 0.27 mg
- 6 months–1 year: 11 mg
- 1–3 years: 7 mg
- 4–8 years: 10 mg
- 9–13 years: 8 mg
- 14–18 years:
 - Girls: 15 mg
 - Boys: 11 mg
 - Pregnant: 27 mg
 - Lactating: 10 mg
- 19–50 years:
 - Women: 18 mg
 - Men: 8 mg
 - Pregnant: 27 mg
 - Lactating: 9 mg

Best Iron Sources

Liver, beef, pork, shrimp, oysters, clams, turkey/chicken (dark meat)

Good Iron Sources*

Iron-fortified cereals

Tofu/soybeans

Beans (black, kidney, pinto, lima, garbanzo, lentils)

Enriched rice/pasta/bread/tortillas

Peas, nuts

Cooked leafy greens (spinach, kale, collard greens, swiss chard)

Prune juice/dried fruits

Canned fish (tuna, sardines, salmon)

Eggs

* Fibers found in vegetable sources may reduce iron absorption

Why is **Vitamin C** important?

- Eating foods high in vitamin C helps your body absorb iron, especially iron from plant foods.
- Try eating high-iron plant foods with high-vitamin C foods at the same time.
- High-vitamin C foods: Oranges, tangerines, papaya, kiwi, berries, watermelon, tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower



Why is **Calcium** important?

- Calcium can decrease the amount of iron you absorb from high-iron foods.
- Toddlers who drink plenty of milk may prefer drinking milk to eating high-iron foods.
- Try to eat high-calcium foods and high-iron foods at different times (not in same meal).
- High-calcium foods: Milk, yogurt, cheese, canned salmon/sardines, fortified tofu/soy, almonds



Iron Health for Women, Infants, and Children

Iron Facts, Foods, and How to Stay Iron Healthy!



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What Does Iron Do?

- Iron is in all cells in the body.
- It helps you grow physically
- ★ and mentally.
- It helps carry oxygen through the body.
- It gives you energy!
- It keeps you healthy by boosting your immune system



Symptoms of Iron Deficiency

- Tiredness/weakness
- More frequent sickness
- Paleness
- Poor appetite
- Difficulty concentrating
- Slow growth and development



Who Is at Risk?

- Infants
- Children
- Adolescents
- Women of childbearing age
- Pregnant women



Why Do Babies Need Iron?

- Babies and young children need a LOT of iron because they are growing so much.
- When babies are born, they have iron stores given from their mom. That storage of iron gets depleted around 6 months of age.
- Breast milk (and iron-fortified formula) provides some iron.
- When introducing new foods, make sure to include those high in iron.
- Premature and low-birthweight babies are at a higher risk for low iron because they do not have as much stored.



Why Do Toddlers Need Iron?

- Young children only get iron from food, and they are still growing a lot!
- Children age 1–3 tend to be picky eaters. They might not like high-iron foods.
- Too much of one food might replace high-iron foods.

Why Do Moms Need Iron?

- Moms need more iron during pregnancy so that they can pass it on to their baby.
- Moms have more blood during pregnancy. That means moms need more iron to carry oxygen through their body and to baby.
- If moms don't get enough iron during pregnancy, it can lead to early delivery and low birth weight and may make baby unhealthy.
- Babies absorb iron well from breast milk. They need a lot to build their iron stores.



Why Do Women Need Iron?

- Women of childbearing age are at risk for iron loss because of their monthly menstruation.
- They are losing iron, so they need more iron from their diet.
- Before and between pregnancies are important times to restore moms' iron, iron that was used up during pregnancies.