





Every Body Needs Iron

Iron is an important mineral. It is found in every cell in your body. Everyone, young and old, needs iron to stay healthy.

Why do we need iron?

We need to eat foods high in iron to make our blood healthy. Iron allows our blood to carry oxygen to every cell in our body. Our cells need oxygen to live. Iron also helps to keep us from getting sick.

How much iron do we need?

The need for iron is highest during periods of rapid growth, such as childhood, adolescence, childbearing years for women, and pregnancy. Extra iron is important during pregnancy because the baby is storing iron it will need to be healthy after it is born and because of the mother's increasing amount of blood in her body. Lack of iron can lead to iron deficiency anemia, which means our blood cannot carry enough oxygen to all the cells in our body. Weakness, pale skin, frequent sickness, unable to think, and feeling tired are all signs that you may not be getting enough iron in your diet.

What are some good sources of iron?

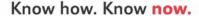
Iron is found in both animal and plant food sources. Many foods that are high in iron are also high in protein. Our bodies absorb iron better when foods high in iron are eaten with foods high in vitamin C. Some foods high in vitamin C are oranges, strawberries, kiwi, dark green vegetables, tomatoes, and peppers. See the "Good Sources of Iron" list for foods that are high in iron.

Dail	v Iron	Needs
Dan	v 11 UII	116602

Infants, 7-12 months	 11 mg
	U
Children, 1-8 years	7-10 mg
Children, 9-13 years	8 mg
Males, 14-18	11 mg
Females, 14-18	15 mg
Men, ages 19-50	8 mg
Women, ages 19-50	18 mg
Men & women, ages 51+	8 mg
Pregnant women	27 mg
Breastfeeding women	9 mg

Good Sources of Iron

Lean meat
Poultry and fish
Dried beans and peas
Iron fortified cereal and grains
Green leafy vegetables





The right amount of iron is key!

Although food is the best way to meet iron needs, supplements are sometimes recommended for people at risk of iron deficiency such as pregnant women. **Please see your doctor before taking an iron supplement because iron can be toxic in large amounts.** Too much iron can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or constipation. Over a long period of time, too much iron can damage your liver.



Here is a low cost recipe high in iron and vitamin C.



Stove Top Chili-Mac

Makes 4 servings

- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 15-ounce can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 15-ounce can kidney beans, undrained
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 3/4 cup uncooked elbow macaroni
- 1. Cook ground beef and onions together in skillet on medium heat, until browned. Stir constantly so that beef does not burn.
- 2. Drain off fat.
- 3. Drain beans and tomato liquid into measuring cup. Add enough water to equal 1 cup.
- 4. Add chopped tomatoes, beans, liquid, chili powder, and macaroni into beef mixture.
- 5. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Cook until macaroni is tender or when it pierces easily with a fork. Stir to keep from sticking.
- 6. Serve hot.

Nutrition Information per Serving: 300 calories, 6 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 480 mg sodium, 41 g carbohydrates, 11 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 21 g protein, vitamin A 25%, vitamin C 35%, calcium 8%, iron 20%

Source: University of Florida Extension http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu, Facts about Iron