

Iron In Foods: Does My Child Get Enough?

Your child needs enough iron:

- To support his or her rapid growth.
- To replace iron that the body uses up.
- To have enough energy to learn and play.

Iron-deficiency anemia is a common nutrition problem for young children. Checking for anemia should be part of your child's regular health exam. Not sure? Ask your child's health care provider.

You need enough iron, too.

Everyone in your family needs iron from food to feel good and stay healthy. Women need it to replace the iron lost each month through menstrual flow. Include iron-rich foods in your family meals and snacks. Your child will benefit, too.

Warning: Iron Poisoning!

Iron pills meant for you can be harmful to your child. Even iron supplements for children can be dangerous if they aren't taken as directed. Too much iron from a pill can cause serious injury, even death.

You can:

- Keep pills with iron in a child-safe container where your child can't reach.
- If your child accidentally swallows iron pills, call your health care provider or the poison control center right away. **Write down the phone number for your local poison control center:**

- Offer iron supplements to your child only as directed by your health care provider. **Your child won't get iron poisoning from food.**

Good Sources of Iron

Offer these foods often.

- Lean meat
- Iron-enriched and whole-grain breads and cereals
- Cooked dried beans (black, kidney, lima, navy, pinto, soy beans)
- Greens (collard, kale, mustard, spinach, turnip green)

Chicken, egg yolks, and dried fruit (raisins, apricots) have iron, too, but not as much.



Iron In Foods: Does My Child Get Enough?

Great Pairing!

The body uses iron from meat and chicken better than iron from beans, grain products, vegetables, dried fruit, and egg yolks. Good news: vitamin C helps the body use the iron from meats. Foods you serve your family make a difference. Try this!

Food with iron

Breakfast cereal

Peanut butter sandwich

Kidney beans in chili

Hard-cooked egg

Pasta salad

Your choice: _____ with



Food with vitamin C

with berries or juice

and a tangerine

with tomato sauce

and orange juice

with bell peppers



Food with iron

Whole-grain bun

Refried beans

Cooked collard greens

Rice

Scrambled egg

Bagel

Your choice: _____ with



with hamburger patty

with chicken burrito

with barbecued beef

with pork stir-fry

with ham

with lean deli meat

Meat source of iron

