

Getting Enough Iron

Eating foods high in iron can help keep you and your family healthy. Eating vitamin C rich foods along with iron-rich foods helps your body use iron.

Are you and your family getting enough iron? If not, you may develop iron deficiency anemia, a condition in which the blood has low levels of iron. Symptoms of anemia may include looking pale, feeling tired, getting sick more easily, and having a baby that is born premature or too small.

Iron is a mineral found in some foods. Eating foods high in iron can help keep you and your family healthy! Here are some tips on how to get enough iron:

What are some ways you and your children can get enough iron

For infants:

- Breastfeed your baby.
- If you give your baby formula, always use formula with iron.
- At about 6 months, start your baby on baby cereal with iron.
- At 6 to 8 months, start your baby on ground meats, mashed beans or tofu.
- Give your baby a vitamin C-rich fruit, vegetable or fruit juice at least once a day.

For adults and children:

- Eat foods rich in iron, such as:
 - beef, pork, chicken, liver, fish,
 - shellfish, and tofu
 - cooked beans
 - WIC cereals
 - enriched breads, rice, pasta, and tortillas
 - leafy greens (spinach, chard, and collards)
 - dried fruit and prune juice
- Eat or drink vitamin C-rich foods (such as oranges, broccoli, tomatoes, bell pepper, cabbage, orange juice, and tomato juice) when you eat foods containing iron. Vitamin C helps your body use iron.

Getting Enough Calcium

Are you getting enough calcium? You need 3 to 4 servings of calcium-rich food each day to prevent osteoporosis! One way to do this is to include a calcium-rich food with each meal, such as an 8-ounce glass of non-fat or low-fat milk.

Are you among the 84% of young women ages 20-29 or 88% of teenage girls who do not get enough calcium each day? Calcium is important for building strong bones and teeth, muscle contractions, and blood clotting. Calcium also helps prevent osteoporosis, a bone thinning disease.

Eat or drink 3 to 4 servings of calcium-rich food each day, depending on your age. (One serving is about ½-¾ cup of milk for children and 1 cup of milk for teens and adults.)

How can you get enough servings of calcium-rich foods today?

Here are some ways to include more calcium in your diet:

- Include calcium-rich foods with each meal. Drink an 8-ounce glass of non-fat or low-fat milk with your meal.
- Use milk instead of water when making hot cereal and soups.
- Have a cup of non-fat or low-fat yogurt for your mid-afternoon snack.
- Eat or drink calcium-fortified foods such as fortified orange juice, soy milk, or rice milk.
- Eat tofu made with calcium sulfate.
- Eat dark green vegetables such as turnip greens, broccoli, kale, and bok choy.
- Eat canned salmon or sardines (eat the soft bones).