

PREVENT ANEMIA: EAT FOODS RICH IN IRON

WITHOUT ENOUGH IRON, YOU MAY HAVE IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA

If you have anemia, your body cannot make enough red blood cells, and your organs will not get the oxygen they need. In children, this can slow growth and cause learning and behavior problems. In pregnant women, anemia increases the chance of giving birth early or having a baby of low birth weight. If not treated, anemia can lead to heart problems.

Many people with anemia don't have any symptoms at first. However, as the anemia worsens, they may:

- Feel tired or weak
- Have pale skin
- Lose their appetite
- Feel dizzy or light-headed

If you or your child has any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor. He or she can check for anemia with a blood test.

PEOPLE OF ALL AGES NEED ENOUGH IRON

Infants that breastfeed get enough iron from breast milk. Infants fed with infant formula should receive formula with iron added. Babies starting to eat solid foods should eat baby cereal with added iron. Women aged 14 to 50 need more iron than men to make up for iron lost during menstruation, especially when they are pregnant. Talk to your doctor to see if you are getting enough iron.



Lean Red Meat
(beef, pork)



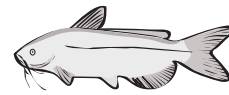
Poultry
(chicken, turkey, duck)



Beans



Shrimp



Fish



Bread
(with iron added)



Liver



Leafy green vegetables



Eggs

Your body can absorb iron from meat better than from plants. If you are vegetarian, get iron from foods such as beans, eggs, leafy green vegetables, and breads and cereals with iron added. Vegetarians need 1.8 times more iron than those that eat meat.

PREVENT ANEMIA

- **Eat foods rich in iron.** Choose foods like lean red meat, seafood, whole grains and seeds, and leafy green vegetables.
- **Eat foods with vitamin C** like tomatoes, broccoli, and oranges that help the body get enough iron.
- **Read food labels.** Look for food packages labeled "Iron Enriched" or "Iron Fortified." However, if you give your child iron-fortified formula, do not give him or her vitamins with iron.
- **Limit black tea, coffee, or soda** at meal times. They make it harder for your body to absorb iron from food.
- **Limit milk to 2 to 3 cups** (16 to 24 fluid ounces) a day. Cow's milk is low in iron. Drinking a lot of milk also decreases appetite, so you or your child may not eat as much iron-rich food.

TAKE IRON PILLS WITH CAUTION

If you have anemia, your doctor may prescribe an iron pill. Iron pills can cause stomach upset, heartburn, and constipation. If you are prescribed iron pills, take them with food. Eat more fiber if you have constipation. If your child is prescribed iron pills, don't give milk to your child when he or she takes the pill. Tell your doctor if the iron pill causes problems. Never use iron pills without talking to your doctor. Too much iron can damage your liver and cause other health problems.



CHARLES B. WANG
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

General Info Line (212) 226-8339

Website www.cbwchc.org

268 Canal Street, New York, NY 10013

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Obstetrics & Gynecology (OB/GYN) (212) 966-0228

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(929) 362-3006

Health Education Department (212) 966-0461

Social Work Department

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