

Iron in Pregnancy

Iron is used to make hemoglobin, a protein in your red blood cells that carries oxygen around your body. Since pregnancy increases your blood volume by around 50%, more iron is needed to make more hemoglobin and supply enough oxygen to you and your baby. Plus, your baby needs to store iron in his or her body to last through the first few months of life. Too little iron can cause a condition called anemia.

Below you will find a list of foods that are high in iron. Incorporating as many of these as possible into your diet is a good way to reach the recommended daily goal for iron intake.

IRON RICH FOODS	
Animal Proteins- especially red meat, fish and poultry	Beef: liver, roundsteak, sirloin, lean hamburger, lunch meats (heated) Pork: tenderloin, bacon, ham Poultry: chicken, turkey Fish: tuna, sardines, clams, shrimp, scallops Other: lamb, eggs
Dried peas and beans	Baked beans, white, navy kidney and great Northern beans, lentils, chili con carne, lima beans, split peas, blackeye peas
Vegetables- especially green leafy	Spinach, green peas, mustard greens, tomato/vegetable juice, dandelion greens, brussel sprouts, broccoli, beets, sweet potato, baked potato
Whole grain products	Bran cereal, total cereal, puffed oat, corn cereal, cream of wheat, shredded oats, wheat noodles, brown rice, whole wheat bread, wheat germ
Fruit (especially dried)	Dried pineapples, prunes, dates, dried apples, dried apricots, raisins, figs, dried peaches
Fats	Peanut butter, nuts
Sugars (sparingly)	Prune juice, apple juice, molasses

If you are found to be anemic, we will recommend that you start an iron supplement in addition to eating iron rich foods. Below is a list of acceptable iron supplements along with specific instructions on how to take them.

- Ferrous sulfate 325mg (65mg iron) take every other day as directed by midwife
 - Take with Vitamin C (fruit or small glass of juice)
 - Avoid taking at same time as prenatal vitamin or calcium containing products (tums, dairy)
 - Can be purchased at any pharmacy
 - These iron supplements can cause constipation, we recommend taking them with a stool softener such as Colace (docusate sodium), 100mg 1 or 2 times per day
- Floradix- Take 2 tsp, 2 or 3 times per day as directed by midwife
 - Liquid, herbal based iron supplement that may be more easily absorbed - must be kept refrigerated.
 - Can be purchased on Amazon or at a local health food store