

Tips for Adding Iron to Meals and Snacks

Breakfast

- Have an orange or grapefruit with your whole grain toast and peanut butter.
- Include tomatoes, red peppers or spinach in an omelette.
- Enjoy mush (oatmeal) with sunflower seeds, and strawberry or kiwi slices.
- Make a smoothie with fortified almond or soymilk, kale or nettles and frozen berries.

Lunch

- Enjoy a deer meat stir fry on top of whole grain rice or quinoa.
- Add legumes (like lentils, chickpeas, black beans, pinto beans, kidney beans) to your favourite beef-chili recipe.
- Add red or green bell pepper, broccoli, spinach and snow peas to a tofu stir-fry.
- Add chickpeas or pumpkin seeds to a spinach salad, along with orange or strawberry slices
- Serve hummus or black bean dip with broccoli, cauliflower, and red and green bell peppers.

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Dinner

- Prepare a potato, cauliflower, lentil curry and serve it over rice. Serve with a squeeze of lemon juice.
- Have enriched or fortified pasta with beef, wild game meat, or red lentils and tomato sauce.
- Add canned pinto beans or black beans to tacos, serve with diced tomatoes and lime.

Snacks

- Use molasses in baking in place of sugar.
- Snack on peanut butter with apples.
- Have trail mix on hand and have $\frac{1}{4}$ cup at a time.
- Dip vegetables in a chickpea hummus dip.
- Have enriched whole-grain toast with peanut butter.

Iron and Pregnancy

What you should know



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Why Iron is Important in Pregnancy

- Iron is needed to make red blood cells which moves oxygen around the body.
- We need more during pregnancy to support the increased amount of blood flow.
- This supplies the growing baby, and supports normal brain development.
- In the third trimester of pregnancy or the final 10 weeks, your baby begins to build their own iron stores ready for the first six months of life. This store is used until your baby starts on iron rich solids.
- Health Canada recommends 27mg/day of iron during pregnancy.

Symptoms of Low Iron

- Headaches
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Pale skin
- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Cold hands and feet

Risks of Low Iron for Baby and Mum

- Pre-term birth.
- Low birth weight.
- Reduced milk production.
- Increased risk of blood transfusion.

Animal Sources of Heme-Iron

Heme-Iron is more easily absorbed by the body.

How Much Iron is in 1 cup of...

• Deer meat roasted	6.7mg
• Chicken, cooked	1.0mg
• Salmon, cooked	1.0mg
• Oyster, whole, canned	26.3mg
• Eggs (2)	0.7mg
• Blue mussel, cooked	10.1mg
• Chiton raw	24mg
• Beef	7.0mg
• Wild duck or goose	4.7mg
• Elk	4.2mg

Plant-Based Sources of Iron

Non-heme iron is absorbed better when eaten with some Vitamin C, with a small amount of heme-iron, or when beans and lentils are soaked before use.

How Much Iron is in 1 cup of...

• Tofu, extra firm	8.0mg
• Lentils and chick peas, cooked	4.7mg
• Beets, canned	1.4mg
• Spinach, boiled	4.2mg
• Potato baked with skin	1.4mg
• Lima beans, boiled	4.2mg
• Split peas	0.9mg
• Pumpkin seeds, roasted	18mg

Tips to Increase Iron Levels

- Choose one iron-rich food at each meal.
- Take a prenatal multi-vitamin.
- Speak to your doctor about Iron supplements if needed
- Boost your body's absorption of plant-based iron sources by
 - ◇ Having some vitamin C with your meal (citrus, red peppers, tomato, kiwi, berries)
 - ◇ Avoiding having dairy with your plant-based iron meals (cheese, milk, yogurt)
 - ◇ Cooking in a cast-iron pan
 - ◇ Have tea and coffee between meals, not with meals



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