

Iron Supplements

Some prenatal vitamins have extra iron. Be sure to take your prenatal vitamins if you are pregnant. If you are unable to tolerate your prenatal vitamin, talk to your doctor about an alternative.

Even with a prenatal vitamin, some women may still need an additional iron supplement. Talk to your doctor about this.

Doctors may prescribe iron drops for your child or infant that has low iron. Carefully follow instructions when giving your child iron drops.

Avoid taking iron supplements with calcium supplements or milk.

*****KEEP ALL IRON PILLS AND DROPS OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN. TOO MANY IRON DROPS OR PILLS CAN BE DEADLY*****

Provided to you by the Pima County Health Department



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Iron

Why Does Iron Matter?

Iron is needed to keep your blood strong. Low iron in the blood, called anemia, can cause the following:

- Feeling tired and weak
- Not eating well
- Poor growth
- Compromised immune system including getting sick more easily, getting infections, and getting headaches
- Having trouble learning
- If you have anemia while pregnant, your baby could be born too soon or too small



Foods High in Iron

- Meat (beef, pork, chicken, turkey, fish, canned tuna, shrimp, clams, beef or chicken liver)
- Cooked beans (pinto, garbanzo, kidney, lima, black, lentils)
- All WIC cereals
- Leafy greens (spinach, chard, collards, parsley, cilantro)
- Prune juice
- Dried fruit
- Peas, snow peas
- Tofu
- Enriched pasta, rice, bread, tortillas, cereals (check the label)

Tips to get more Iron:

- Add a little bit of meat to other foods
- Cook food in cast iron skillets, pots, or pans
- Soak dry beans in cold water for several hours before you cook them. Drain them and cook them in new water.



Vitamin C

Eating vitamin C and iron together can help your body use the iron you eat. Foods with vitamin C include:

- Vegetables- potatoes, tomato, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, bell pepper
- Fruit- orange, cantaloupe, mango, papaya, grapefruit, strawberry, lemon, lime
- Juice- orange, grapefruit, tomato, lemon, and lime.*

Ways to combine vitamin C and iron include:

- Have orange juice with cereal*
- Cook beans with tomatoes
- Add salsa to your taco
- Add a slice of tomato to your hamburger or sandwich



*Limit juice to 6oz daily

Dairy

Calcium makes it harder for your body to use iron. Dairy products are the most common food with calcium. Avoid eating a lot of dairy with your high iron foods.

Dairy products are also low in iron. Drinking too much milk can fill your child up and keep them from eating iron rich foods leading to anemia.