



## Good Food Sources of Iron

You must carefully read the "Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer" below in order to understand and correctly use this information

### About this topic

Iron is a mineral needed to help your body work the right way. It is found in each cell of the body and does many things. One of its most important jobs is to help the red blood cells in your blood carry oxygen to all of your tissues and body parts. If you do not have enough iron you will not have enough red blood cells. This is called iron-poor blood or anemia. Low iron in your blood and body is also called iron deficiency. Signs of low iron are always being tired and weak and looking pale.

Your doctor will work with you to raise the level of iron in your blood. You may be told to eat foods with a higher level of iron. Your body will absorb iron from animal sources more easily than iron from plant sources. Your doctor may also give you drugs with iron in them.

## Iron Rich Diet

Eat This



# Food Label

## Macaroni & Cheese

Nutrition Facts	
<b>1 Start here</b> →	2 servings per container <b>Serving size 1 cup (228g)</b>
<b>2 Check calories</b> →	<b>Amount per serving</b> <b>Calories 250</b>
<b>3 Limit these nutrients</b> →	<b>% Daily Value*</b> <b>Total Fat</b> 12g <b>18%</b> Saturated Fat 3g <b>15%</b> Trans Fat 3g <b>Cholesterol</b> 30 mg <b>10%</b> <b>Sodium</b> 470mg <b>20%</b>
<b>4 Get enough of these nutrients</b> →	<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g <b>10%</b> Dietary Fiber 0g <b>0%</b> Total Sugars 5g Includes 0g Added Sugars <b>0%</b> <b>Protein</b> 5g Vitamin A 4% Vitamin C 2% Calcium 20% Iron 4%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

### What will the results be?

Your doctor will talk to you about your need for iron. You can also talk about what changes you can expect when you are getting more iron.

### What changes to diet are needed?

Ask to speak to a dietitian who can help you choose the best food sources of iron.

### When is this diet used?

Your doctor will order this diet if you:

- Are pregnant or breastfeeding
- Have blood loss. This may come from heavy menstrual periods, or stomach or bowel problems. Sometimes, it is because you often donate blood.
- Are not getting enough iron in your diet. This may happen if you follow a vegetarian diet.
- Have low iron levels in your blood. This may be due to eating food or taking drugs that lower iron absorption.

### Who should not use this diet?

If you have illnesses that cause too much iron in your body.

## What foods are good to eat?

Healthy foods which give you more iron, like:

- Red meat
- Liver
- Oysters, clams, shrimp, and sardines
- Egg yolks
- Chicken and turkey
- Tomato paste
- Cereal and grains with iron added
- Dark leafy greens, like spinach and collards
- Tofu
- Beans
- Dried fruit, like prunes and raisins

Eat foods with lots of vitamin C when you eat iron-rich foods. This will help your body take in and absorb the iron. These vitamin C foods are:

- Oranges and orange juice
- Grapefruit and grapefruit juice
- Guavas
- Kiwi
- Tomatoes
- Bell peppers
- Broccoli
- Brussel sprouts
- Potatoes
- Strawberries

## What foods should be limited or avoided?

The body may not absorb as much iron from your food if you drink black or pekoe tea. Limit drinking these with meals. Drugs for heartburn may also limit how much iron your body takes in. Talk to your doctor if you take these kinds of drugs. Calcium can also limit how much iron your body takes in. Limit foods high in calcium when you eat foods high in iron.

## What problems could happen?

- Low iron levels can lead to iron deficiency anemia. Signs include lack of energy, problems breathing, headache, low mood, or feeling dizzy or weak.
- Too much iron may lead to iron poisoning. Signs include fatigue, joint or belly pain, irregular heart rate, hair loss, changes in skin color, and organ damage. This can lead to diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, liver disease, and liver cancer.

## When do I need to call the doctor?

Health problem is not better or you are feeling worse

## Where can I learn more?

Eat Right

<https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/preventing-illness/iron-deficiency>

Kids Health

<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/iron.html?ref=search#>

## Last Reviewed Date

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Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer:

This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from your health care provider. This is only a brief summary of general information. It does NOT include all information about conditions, illnesses, injuries, tests, procedures, treatments, therapies, discharge instructions or life-style choices that may apply to you. You must talk with your health care provider for complete information about your health and treatment options. This information should not be used to decide whether or not to accept your health care provider's advice, instructions or recommendations. Only your health care provider has the knowledge and training to provide advice that is right for you.

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