

Iron

Iron is an important nutrient that carries oxygen all around your body through your blood. Without adequate iron, known as iron-deficiency anemia, your body can't function properly. A child with low iron levels may feel tired/weak or want to eat non-food items such as dirt. Speak with your child's physician about their iron level.

Age	Iron Needed Daily
7-12 months	11 mg
1-3 years	7 mg
4-8 years	10 mg
9-13 years	8 mg
14-18 years (male)	11 mg
14-18 years (female)	15 mg

Iron can be found in both animal and non-animal sources. Iron from animal sources (heme iron) is easier for the body to process than non-animal sources (non-heme iron).

Good sources of iron:

- Beef (2.5 mg in 3 oz)
- Poultry (1.1 mg in 3oz)
- Fish (0.8-5.7 mg in 3oz)
- Beans (1.8-2.3mg in ½ cup)
- Lentils (3.3 mg in ½ cup)
- Fortified grains (4.5 mg or more in 1 cup)
- Spinach (3.2 mg in 1 cup)

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Calcium can prevent the body from absorbing iron. Limit milk to 16-24 oz daily. Offer milk separately from meals and iron supplementation.

To help your child's body absorb the iron in their food, offer an iron-containing food with a vitamin C containing food. Most fruits and vegetables are a good source of vitamin C

Cooking in a cast iron skillet can help to increase iron levels.