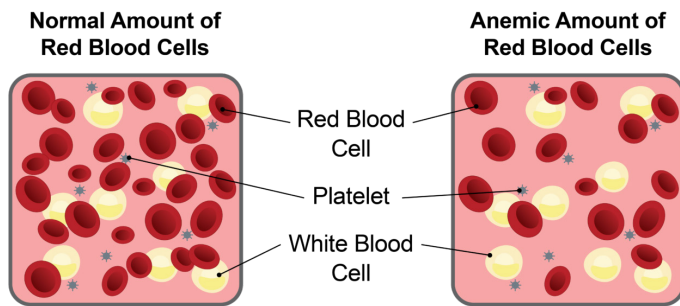


Iron Rich Foods

What is Iron and why is it important?

Iron is an important component of hemoglobin, the part of the red blood cell that carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. Iron gives hemoglobin the strength to “carry” oxygen in the blood, so oxygen gets to where it needs to go.



Adapted from the National Institutes of Health.³

The body needs Iron to make hemoglobin. Without Iron, the body makes less red blood cells. This means tissues and organs won't have the oxygen they need.

Your provider checks your hemoglobin to see how your iron levels are. If they are low it may mean your child needs to eat more foods that contain iron.

How can I help my child get enough Iron?

Foods that are rich in iron include:

- Beef, pork, poultry, and seafood
- Dried beans and peas
- Dried fruits
- Leafy dark green vegetables
- Iron enriched breakfast cereals
- Whole grain breads and pastas
- Eggs

Tip: Vitamin C helps the body absorb Iron.

Serve Iron rich foods alongside foods containing vitamin C (such as tomatoes, broccoli, oranges, and strawberries).

Your provider may ask you to do one or more of the following to help make sure patients get enough iron:

- Limit the amount of milk they drink. For children 1 year and older, the recommended amount of milk intake is 16-24 ounces a day.
- Serve iron fortified infant cereal
- Avoid serving coffee or tea at mealtime. Both decrease the absorption of iron.

Ask your provider when it is necessary for iron levels to be checked again.