

High Iron Diet

A High Iron Diet is often recommended for iron deficiency anemia in women. Absorption of iron from food is influenced by multiple factors. One important factor is the form of the iron. *Heme Iron*, found in animal sources, is highly available for absorption. *Non-Heme Iron* on the other hand, found in vegetable sources, is less available.

Heme Iron Foods:

Meat and Meat Substitutions:

- Excellent Sources of Iron
 - Lean Red Meat (Beef, Lamb, Pork, Veal)
 - Organ Meats (Liver)
 - Poultry
 - Eggs
 - Seafood (Clams, Mussels, Shrimp, Sardines)
 - Nuts
 - Beans (Dried Peas, Dried Beans)



Non-Heme Iron Foods:

Vegetables and Fruits:

- Good Sources of Iron
 - Dark Green Leafy Vegetables (Spinach, Kale)
 - Beans (Green, Lima, Peas)
 - Root Vegetables (Beets, White Potatoes)
 - Cauliflower
 - Sprouts (Bean, Alfalfa)
 - Artichokes
 - Dates, Prunes, Raisins
- Good Sources to Increase Iron Absorption
 - Citrus Fruits - Oranges, Lemons, Limes

Breads and Cereals:

- Enriched, Fortified and Whole Grain Breads and Cereals - Check Package Contents
- Grains (Wild Rice, Oats, Wheat, Bran, Macaroni)
- Pumpkin Seeds

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Milk and Dairy:

- Good Sources of Iron
 - Molasses (Blackstrap)
 - Brewer's Yeast - Dried
 - Chocolate
- Poor Sources of Iron
 - Milk
 - Cheeses
 - Ice Cream
 - Yogurt

Helpful Hints:

- The intake of high fiber, cellulose foods (ie: celery), caffeine (ie: coffee, tea, soda), and anti-acid medications decrease iron absorption.
- Absorption of the iron occurs in the upper part of the small intestine within four hours after eating. Since the body appears unable to control its resources of iron by selective secretion, it is very important to add these high iron foods to your diet in order to keep your iron level adequate.
- The absorption of Non-heme iron can be improved when a source of heme iron is consumed in the same meal.
- The best rule is to eat regular nutritionally balanced meals and drink plenty of fluids.

If you are a registered Millersville University student and you have questions or you need to make an appointment, please call Millersville University Health Services at 871-5250.