

## TENTH STREET PEDIATRIC MEDICAL GROUP, INC.

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### IRON

Iron is essential for the transport of oxygen in the body. Much of the body's iron is found in the hemoglobin of the red blood cells where it assists oxygen delivery to all tissues. Iron is also found in the myoglobin component of muscle. It is stored in the liver, spleen and bone marrow. Adequate iron intake in the diet is needed to maintain optimum health, replenish iron stores, and prevent iron deficiency anemia.

#### Cooking tips:

- ◆ Iron is best absorbed from a diet that is also rich in Vitamin C, so citrus fruits and iron-rich juices should be consumed.
- ◆ "Old-fashioned" cast iron cooking pans can add large amounts of iron to the diet because the cooked food leaches the iron from the pan. This is a good iron source, especially for vegetarians.

#### Recommended Daily Dietary Allowance (RDA)\*

Infants up to 20 lbs.	15 mg per day
Children ages 4 - 10	10 mg a day
Children ages 11 - 18	18 mg a day
Women	18 mg a day
Men	10 mg a day

#### Vegetarian Sources of Iron \*\*

10.5 mg Prune juice, 1 C	2.6 mg Raisins, ½ C
7.9 mg Black beans, 1 C cooked	2.6 mg Chard, 1 C cooked
6.9 mg Garbanzo beans, 1 C cooked	2.4 mg Dates, 10 medium
6.1 mg Pinto beans, 1 C cooked	2.3 mg Tofu, 4 oz
5.1 mg Navy beans, 1 C cooked	2.2 mg Tomato juice, 1 C
4.9 mg Soybeans, 1 C cooked	2.1 mg Wheat berries, 1/3 C dry
4.8 mg Rice bran, ¼ C	2.1 mg Butternut squash, 1 C baked
4.3 mg Lima beans, green, 1 C cooked	2.0 mg Pumpkin seeds, 2 tbsp
4.2 mg Lentils, 1 C cooked	1.9 mg Wheat bran, ¼ C
4.0 mg Spinach, 1 C cooked	1.8 mg Soybean milk, 1 C
3.9 mg Peach halves, dried, 5	1.8 mg Kale, 1 C cooked
3.2 mg <b>Blackstrap molasses, 1 tbsp</b>	1.8 mg Prunes, 5 cooked
3.2 mg <b>Peanuts, 3-½ oz</b>	1.7 mg Brussels sprouts, 8 cooked
3.0 mg Mustard/dandelion greens, ½ C	1.5 mg <b>Strawberries, 1 C</b>
2.9 mg Peas, fresh, 2 C.	1.4 mg Oatmeal, 1 C cooked
2.8 mg Beet greens, 1 C cooked	1.4 mg Potato, cooked, large

### Dairy Sources of Iron \*

0.1-.3 mg Most cheese, 1 oz  
(1"x1"x1") trace milk and  
yogurt, 1 C

1.3 mg **Egg, 1 large, whole**  
1.2 mg Egg, yolk only

### Meat Sources of Iron \*

3.6 mg Most beef cuts, 4 oz portion  
1.7 mg Lamb (1 lean trimmed chop)  
1.6 mg **Shrimp, 3-½ oz fresh**

1.6 mg Tuna (canned in water) ½ C  
1.1 mg Chicken, 3-½ oz, boneless  
0.4 mg Fish sticks, 1 serving

**NOTE:** Blackstrap molasses, strawberries & egg whites should be given after 1 year of age.  
Shrimp and other shellfish should be given after 2 years of age.  
Peanuts should be given after 3 years of age.

### Dietary recommendations:

- ◆ Iron supplementation from one or more sources should start no later than 4 months of age in term infants, and no later than 2 months of age in pre-term infants. Note that almost all infant formulas are iron fortified. Breast feeding mothers should continue their prenatal vitamins because these provide iron in the breast milk.
- ◆ Iron supplementation should continue through the remainder of the first year of life
- ◆ As solid foods are added to the infant diet, iron-fortified cereal should be among the first.
- ◆ Infant formulas are preferable to fresh cow's milk as substitutes for breast milk during the first 6-12 months of life, because excessive ingestion of fresh cow's milk may contribute to iron deficiency by (often microscopic) gastrointestinal blood loss (the same is not generally true for fermented milk products like yogurt and cheese).

Information from:

\* Food Values of Portions Commonly Used, Bowes and Church. J.B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia/Toronto, copyright 1970

\*\* Laurel's Kitchen, A Handbook for Vegetarian Cookery and Nutrition. Nilgiri Press. Copyright 1976, pg 492.