ESSENTIALS FOR NUTRITION -
IRON

WHY IS IRON IMPORTANT?
◊ Your blood requires iron to be healthy.
◊ Iron helps your body build healthy blood cells.
◊ Children need iron to grow.
◊ Pregnant women need extra iron to help their babies grow.
◊ Children with low iron in their blood can have learning problems.

HOW DO I ADD IRON TO MY DIET? *
◊ Eat a wide variety of foods every day and include iron rich foods.
◊ Add meats to foods to add more iron.
◊ Limit tea and coffee at meals. They are known as “iron blockers.”
◊ Vitamin C rich foods help your body use the iron you get from foods.

BEST IRON FOODS: 
➢ Deer meat
➢ Lean beef
➢ Lean pork
➢ Lean turkey
➢ Lean chicken
➢ Fish, including tuna
➢ Egg yolks

GOOD IRON FOODS
➢ WIC cereals
➢ Spinach
➢ Whole grain breads
➢ Corn or flour tortillas
➢ Beans
➢ Rice
➢ Tofu
➢ Peanut butter**

TIP
Especially for toddlers and young children, limit milk to 2 cups (16 ounces) per day. Milk is high in calcium but low in iron.

BEST VITAMIN C FOODS (PAIR THESE WITH HIGH IRON FOODS TO HELP YOU ABSORB THE IRON):
❖ Red peppers
❖ Oranges
❖ Kiwi fruit
❖ Green peppers
❖ Broccoli
❖ Strawberry
❖ Grapefruit
❖ Cantaloupe
❖ Cabbage
❖ Cauliflower
❖ Potatoes
❖ Tomatoes
❖ Spinach
❖ Green peas
❖ WIC juice

SOME GREAT PAIRINGS
Hamburger with tomatoes
Cooked egg with an orange
Beans with tomatoes
Rice with red or green peppers
WIC cereal with WIC juice
Tuna with peas
WIC cereal with strawberries
Whole wheat toast with cantaloupe
Corn tortilla with potatoes
Tofu with spinach

*Ask your doctor about an iron supplement. Keep iron supplements out of the reach of children.
**Check with your doctor before giving peanut butter to an infant.

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