

All you need to know about

Your Baby

and Iron



Iron is important for healthy brain development and learning. It also helps build red blood cells and carries oxygen through the body.

During pregnancy a baby will get all of the iron needed from its mother. A full-term healthy baby will store enough iron to last for their first 6 months of life.

How can I make sure my baby gets enough iron?

Babies birth to 6 months

- Breastfeed your baby or use an iron fortified formula

Babies 6 to 12 months

- Continue to breastfeed or use an iron fortified infant formula
- Wait until 6 months of age to introduce solid food
- Offer iron-rich foods 2 or more times a day



What foods have iron?

Foods that are rich in iron



Infant cereal

Beef

Pork



Chicken

Turkey



Fish

Lamb

Eggs

Other sources of iron



Lentils

Chickpeas

Beans



Tofu

Spinach

Broccoli



Brussel sprouts

Peas

Did you know? Cow's milk does NOT have iron. Whole (pasteurized) cow's milk can be introduced between 9 to 12 months of age, while continuing to provide iron-rich foods.

Making baby food

Meat Recipe

Directions

1. Place raw meat in a pot. Add enough water to cover it. Cover the pot with a lid and boil until meat is tender.
2. Remove the fat, skin, and bones.
3. For babies just starting meats, add cooked meat to a chopper or blender and add a small amount of water. Puree until smooth.
4. For older babies, cut meat into small pieces.
5. Store cooked meat for up to 1 day in the fridge, 3 months in a fridge freezer, or 6 months in a deep freezer.



Legumes Recipe

Directions

1. Use cooked or canned legumes (beans, peas and lentils). Rinse canned legumes before using them.
2. Heat up legumes. Puree until smooth using a blender.
3. Store cooked legumes for up to 2 days in the fridge, 3 months in a fridge freezer, or 6 months in a deep freezer.

Infant Cereal Recipe

Infant cereals are a good source of iron and can be introduced to your baby starting at 6 months. Most babies can only eat 1-2 tablespoons at first. Slowly increase this amount over time.

Directions

1. Start with 1 tablespoon of dry infant cereal and mix with 2-3 tablespoons of breastmilk, formula or water (some infant cereals already contain formula and should be mixed with water).
2. The cereal should be thin and runny to start. As your baby gets older, make the cereal thicker by adding less liquid.

Did you know? Babies should not be given iron supplements unless recommended by a health care provider.

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References: Canada Medical Advisory Board (2015). Why your baby needs iron. Retrieved from <https://www.babycenter.ca/a1040701/why-your-baby-needs-iron>; Dietitians of Canada. Infant Nutrition - Complementary Feeding: Evidence Summary. In Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition [PEN], 2018, January 15.

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