

1. Eat foods that are good sources of iron every day.

- Just eating a little meat with other foods helps your body get more iron. Add a small bit of meat to beans or a vegetable dish for more iron.
- Clams and oysters are loaded with iron. Always eat them cooked.
- If you don't eat animal foods, eat beans every day.
- To prepare dry beans, soak beans for several hours in cold water before you cook them. Pour off the water and use new water to cook the beans. Your body will take in more iron this way.

2. Eat vitamin C rich foods with iron rich foods to help your body use iron better.

- Vitamin C rich foods are "iron-helpers," which means they help your body use iron better. Eating an orange or strawberries with your breakfast cereal or adding some salsa to your taco helps you get more iron.
- Cook vitamin C rich foods and iron rich foods together for more iron. Try cooking beans with tomatoes or chilies.



3. Coffee, tea, and sodas may block iron from getting into your body.

- If you drink any coffee, tea, or soda (including decaffeinated), drink them between meals instead of with meals. These drinks can block iron from your body.

4. Cook foods in cast iron skillets, pots or pans to add extra iron to your food.

5. Follow your health care provider's recommendation about prenatal vitamins or iron supplements.