

## Iron Needs for Women

Iron is an important component to healthy red blood cells that keep the body energized. But consuming enough iron is often a struggle for many women. Animal foods such as meat, poultry and fish are high in iron. Women who limit or avoid meat may find that getting enough iron every day is a challenge. The good news is that you can get the daily recommended amount of iron by making careful food choices.

Most grain foods such as cereals, pasta, rice and bread are now fortified with iron. Foods that are naturally high in iron include beans (pinto, kidney, black), lentils, split peas and spinach. The form of iron found in meat is more readily absorbed by the body than the iron in plant foods.

However, you can increase the amount of iron that is absorbed from all food sources by consuming vitamin C-rich foods along with foods high in iron. Good vitamin C choices include orange juice, red and green bell peppers, broccoli, strawberries, tomatoes and potatoes.