

Iron-Deficiency Anemia Diet

Causes of iron-deficiency anemia

- **Diets low in iron:** Iron is obtained from foods in our diet, however, only 1 mg of iron is absorbed for every 10 to 20 mg of iron ingested. A person unable to have a balanced iron-rich diet may suffer from some degree of iron-deficiency anemia.
- **Body changes:** Increased iron requirements and increased red blood cell production is required when the body is going through changes such as growth in children and adolescents, or greater demands for iron during pregnancy and lactation.
- **Gastrointestinal tract abnormalities:** Malabsorption of iron is common after some forms of gastrointestinal surgeries. Most of the iron taken in by foods is absorbed in the upper small intestine. Any abnormalities in the gastrointestinal tract could alter iron absorption and result in iron-deficiency anemia.
- **Blood loss/Hemorrhage:** Loss of blood due to GI bleeding, abnormal menstrual cycles or any injury can decrease the iron status of the body and result in iron-deficiency anemia.

Iron-rich diet

Eating a diet with iron-rich foods can help treat iron-deficiency anemia. Good sources of iron include the following:

- Meats - beef, pork, lamb, liver, and other organ meats
- Poultry - chicken, duck, turkey, liver (especially dark meat)
- Fish - shellfish, including clams, mussels, and oysters, sardines, anchovies
- Leafy greens of the cabbage family, such as broccoli, turnip greens, asparagus..
- Legumes, such as lima beans and green peas, black-eyed peas, and baked beans and lentils, chickpeas
- Yeast-leavened whole-wheat bread and rolls
- Eggs
- Dried fruits, raisins, walnuts, peanuts
- Iron-enriched white bread, pasta, rice, and breakfast cereals, baked potato with skin, branflakes