

How to maximize Iron Absorption

- Iron absorption is optimal when vitamins are taken on an empty stomach.
- Minimize gastric upset by not taking vitamins with milk or calcium products.
- Certain foods inhibit iron absorption as much as half.
- The ideal is to take vitamins 1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal with water or preferably citric juice.

If you experience nausea difficulties, take your vitamin with a piece of toast, saltine crackers, or with your meal if necessary. The following foods and minerals interfere with iron absorption and should be consumed 1 hour before or 2 hours after your vitamin:

Calcium	Antacids
Tea	Anti-inflammatory Agents
Coffee	Chloramphenicol
Soda Pop	Deferoxzmine
Caffeine Products	Penicilamine
Protein	Tetracyclines
Milk or Dairy Products	Sulfanamides
Eggs	Randitine
Legumes (Peas and Beans)	Quinidine
Dietary Fiber (Bran, lignin)	Copper
Phosphate	Cadmium
Magnesium	Manganese
Cobalt	

If you have questions or are having trouble taking your iron supplements, please contact your physician.

Grabe, C. Martines-Torres, C. & Layrisse, C: Effects of meals and ascorbic acid on the absorption of a therapeutic dose of iron as ferrous and ferric salts. Cuff. Ther. Res, 1975. 17. 382-397.

Ekenved, G Iron absorption studies on oral iron preparations using serum iron and different radio iron isotope techniques. Scand. J. Haematol. 1976 Suppl. 28, 7-97

Kirilin, L. Case management of the anemic patient: epodetin alfa-focus on iron supplementation. ANNA J. 1993, 20678-681.

Sources of Iron

Excellent Sources (3.5 mg or more)	Good Sources (2.1 to 3.4 mg)	Sources (0.7 to 2.0 mg)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beef liver (3oz) • Clams, 4 large or 9 small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beef, lean (3oz) • Oysters, 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corned beef (2oz) • Canned sardines (2) • Egg yok (1) • Chicken and turkey (3oz) • Ham, lamb and pork (3oz) • Tuna and salmon (3oz) • Perch, halibut, bass (3oz) • Clam chowder, canned (1/2 cup)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tofu, regular or firm (1/4 cup) • Soybeans, white beans, lentils, cooked (1/2 cup) • Blackstrap molasses (1 tbsp) • Fortified whole grain cold cereals such as Corn Bran™, Raisin Bran™, Shreddies™ (1 cup) • Fortified hot cereals such as Cream of Wheat™ (instant) Quaker Oatmeal™ (instant) (1 pouch) • Pumpkin, squash seeds, dry (1/4 cup) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spinach, cooked (1/2 cup) • Potato with skin (1 med) • Egg noodles, cooked (1 cup) • Pasta, enriched, cooked (1 cup) • Kidney, chick peas and navy beans, cooked (3/4 cup) • Lima beans, cooked (1/2 cup) • Split peas, cooked (1 cup) • Sesame seeds or paste (tahini) (2 tbsp) • Fortified cold cereals such as Cheerios™, Rice Krispies™, Special K™ (1 cup) • Fortified hot cereals such as Cream of Wheat™ (1 cup) • Cereal bars such as Vector Bar™ (1) • Sunflower seeds (1/4 cup) • Tempeh (1/4 cup) • Quinoa, cooked (1/2 cup) Baked beans, canned (3/4 cup) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broccoli (1 cup) • Green peas, kale bok choy (1/2 cup) • Tomato sauce (1/2 cup) • Almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, peanuts soy nuts (3 tbsp) • Prune juice (1/2 cup) • Brown rice, cooked (1 cup) • Bread, whole grain (1 slice) • Dried figs (3) • Dried apricots (5) • Dried dates (10) • Raisins (1/4 cup) • Wheat germ (1/4 cup) • Hot cereals such as oatmeal (regular), Red River™ (1 cup) • Soy milk (1 cup) • Soy based meat analogs such as veggie burgers, hot dogs and deli slices