

# Iron

## Just What Is Iron?

- Iron is a mineral needed for healthy blood and to promote good health.
- Everyone needs it.

## So Why Do I Need Iron?

- To prevent Iron Deficiency Anemia.

## What Is Iron Deficiency Anemia?

- Iron Deficiency Anemia is caused by having too little iron in your blood.
- Many of us are anemic and don't even know it.
- With anemia, you may feel extra tired and more run down.
- If you are pregnant these very same things can happen to your baby.
- A child with anemia may have a harder time learning and concentrating at school.

## How Can I Get Enough iron?

- Every day you should eat foods that have iron in them, like meats, and fortified cereals.
- This may be hard to do if you are pregnant. Often the doctor will prescribe an iron pill.
- It is still best to get iron from both food and the iron pill. Sometimes all of the iron in the pill may not be used by the body.
- Try not to drink coffee or tea with your meals. They can keep your body from using iron.
- Foods with Vitamin C in them, like fruits and juices, help your body use iron.

## Does Anyone Need Extra Iron? You Bet!

- Pregnant women, infants and children need extra iron.
- Pregnant women need extra iron stores to make up for the blood they lose at their baby's birth.
- Infants and children need extra iron because they are growing. And as they grow, their blood supplies grow. Extra iron keeps their blood supplies healthy and growing properly.

## How Does My Baby Get Enough Iron?

- Breastmilk is best!
- Iron fortified formula & cereals
- Plain strained meats (plain meats have more iron than combination dinners)
- Dried beans and peas for older babies

## One More Thing!

- Try to drink your WIC juice with your cereal.

