

Iron

Fe

Iron is essential for good health:

- Iron carries oxygen in the body.
- Iron helps fight infections.
- Iron is essential for the brain.

Main symptoms of low levels of iron in the body:

- A lack of energy and irritability.
- Frequent infections.
- Reduced attention span and learning difficulties.
- Slower growth.

If your child exhibits any of these symptoms, you should:

- Consult a health professional to determine if blood tests are necessary to identify a low blood iron level.
- Make sure your child gets more foods that are rich in iron. In consultation with your health professional, iron supplements might also be necessary.



A big thank you to all children and parents who participated in the Nunavik Childcare Study.
Nakurmiik!

The Nunavik Childcare Study on IRON revealed that 50% of preschool children in the region have low blood iron levels. 15% reached the anemia stage.
(Nunavik Childcare Study 2006-2010)



Food with good sources of iron: What you need to know!

- Dietary iron comes from both meat and plant foods. But iron from meat is more efficiently absorbed by the body.
- Iron from plants and eggs is absorbed by the body better, if eaten with meat or vitamin C-rich foods.

Recommendations

Serve your child iron-rich foods at least 3 to 4 times a day. Try to serve meat twice a day.

IRON-RICH FOODS		
Meat and Fish Clams, mussels, oysters and seal Caribou, beef and pork Ptarmigan, goose, chicken and turkey Fish	Grains Baby cereals Breakfast cereals and oatmeal Bannock Bread and pasta	Other Sources Eggs Legumes (kidney beans, chick peas and lentils) Nuts Dark leafy greens (seaweed and spinach) Dried fruit (raisins)

Serve vitamin C-rich food as often as possible with iron-rich food.

For example: breakfast cereal (iron) + 100% pure orange juice (vitamin C)
 or egg sandwiches (iron) + tomatoes (vitamin C)
 Vitamin C helps the body absorb iron.

VITAMIN C-RICH FOODS		
Fruit Oranges Kiwis Berries (aqpiqs, cranberries and strawberries) Cantalope 100% pure orange juice	Vegetables Sweet peppers (red, green, orange) Broccoli Potatoes Tomatoes (fresh or canned) tomato juice	Other Sources Fish eggs Muktuk Liver Clams and mussels

Wait until your baby is about **1 year old** to introduce **3.25% cow milk.**

In addition to milk, children need to eat a variety of foods at each meal and snack including iron-rich foods. Serve beverage at the end of meals whenever possible.

