



DIETARY IRON

Questions About Iron Deficiency

Dietary iron sources are readily available!

Iron rich foods can be budget friendly and easy to prepare. Iron supplements may not be necessary when a person is able to identify iron rich foods and how the body absorbs iron.

Nutrients like calcium and caffeine can inhibit iron absorption in the body.

For optimal absorption, it is recommended to consume iron rich foods separate from those high in caffeine and calcium.
(most commonly dairy products)

Vitamin C enhances the body's ability to absorb iron.

Consuming a source of vitamin C with an iron source can help the body to more efficiently absorb and utilize dietary iron.

Foods high in vitamin C include: citrus fruits, broccoli, bell peppers, kiwi, melons, strawberries and tomatoes.

Heme iron is more readily absorbed in the body than non-heme iron.

Heme iron sources are mostly meats, such as red meat, pork and poultry. Non-heme iron sources still contain iron, but it requires larger amounts to get the same benefit.

Non-heme sources include: green leafy vegetables, beans, eggs, peas, fortified cereals, breads and pastas.

MAXIMIZE THE AMOUNT OF IRON CONSUMED AND ABSORBED IN THE DIET!

Consume iron rich foods with a source of vitamin C! Avoid eating caffeine and dairy with iron rich foods.