



KidFood

Nutrition Matters

Healthy Eating for Today's Kids

February 2007

Happy, Healthy & Wise

Children grow fast!

An average preschool child can grow 4 inches and gain 4 pounds in a year. Children need lots of nutritious foods to grow.

Iron is important for children. Iron is used to make hemoglobin. Hemoglobin carries oxygen from the lungs to every cell in the body. Children use iron for growing muscles and blood.

What happens if my child doesn't get enough iron in his diet?

He may become tired easily. This can affect his ability to learn. This is not good! Children need plenty of energy to play and learn.

Children who have low levels of iron usually do not feel well.

Small children usually don't know why they don't feel good. They feel tired and just don't have enough iron.

Being low in iron can also affect your child's immune system.

Your child is more likely to become sick. He can easily catch the flu and cold germs that are shared by other children.

Help your child be happy, healthy and wise! Offer good sources of iron for your child.



How can you be sure your child gets enough iron?

Start by offering good sources of iron in his diet:

- Offer meat, dried beans, peanut butter or eggs twice a day.
- Serve iron-fortified breakfast cereal for breakfast or for a snack once a day.
- Offer foods that are high in vitamin C at meals and snacks.

High Iron Foods

Meat and high protein foods:

Beef, pork, lamb and veal

Chicken, turkey and fish

Dried beans and peas

Peanut butter, peanuts and other seeds

Breads and Cereals:

Breakfast cereals with at least 25% of the Daily Value for iron.

Whole grain or enriched breads, cereals, pasta and rice.

Vegetables and Fruits:

Dark green vegetables - spinach, Swiss chard, kale, and broccoli

Dried fruits - raisins, prunes, dates, and dried peaches

Getting the most iron!

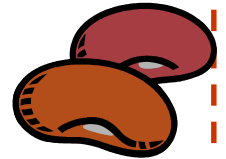
Offer meat at lunch and dinner.

The iron in meat is better absorbed than the iron from non-meat foods.

However, there is a way to increase the absorption of iron from non-meat foods. Vitamin C will help increase the amount of iron that you absorb from breads, cereals, vegetables and fruits.

So serve orange juice with iron-fortified breakfast cereals.

Mexican Bean Dip



2 cups fat-free refried beans

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup salsa

1 cup shredded low fat cheddar cheese

1. Mix refried beans and salsa together.
2. Cover and heat in a microwave.
3. Spread on a plate. Top with shredded cheese.
4. Heat in the microwave until cheese melts.

- Serve bean dip with low fat corn chips.
- Dip raw vegetables into dip. Try carrots sticks, celery sticks, or cucumbers.
- Spread bean dip on a tortilla shell. Roll up and eat!
- Spread bean dip on whole grain crackers.
- Top pita bread with bean dip.

Enjoy these vitamin C foods:

100% juice with 100% vitamin C

Broccoli, cabbage, tomatoes

Oranges, grapefruit, tangerines

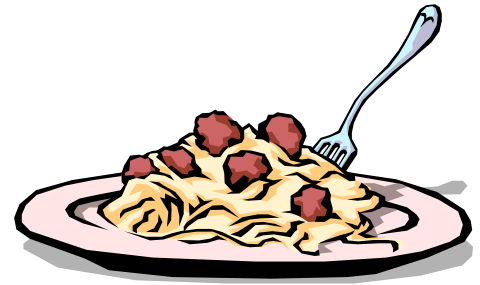
Kiwi fruit, strawberries, papaya

Watermelon, cantaloupe and other melons



Spaghetti and Meatballs

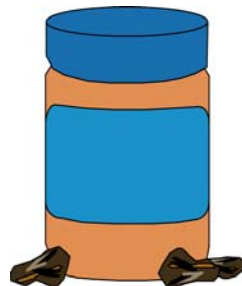
- 3/4 cup extra-lean ground beef
- 1/3 cup breadcrumbs (about 1 slice of bread)
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup spaghetti sauce
- 8 ounces spaghetti or angel hair pasta



1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray a cookie sheet with vegetable oil cooking spray.
2. Crumble ground beef into a large mixing bowl. Add breadcrumbs, oregano, and egg. Combine ingredients thoroughly.
3. Roll meatball mixture into 1/2-inch balls and place on cookie sheet.
4. Bake in the oven for 16-18 minutes, turning once in the middle of cooking.
5. Cook spaghetti in a large pot according to package directions.
6. Remove meatballs and serve over pasta with spaghetti sauce.
7. Try different pasta noodles for variety.

High Iron Snacks

- Peanut butter on bread, toast or crackers.
- Dip apple slices or banana chunks in peanut butter.
- Breakfast cereals are high in iron and a fun finger food!
- Bowl of high iron breakfast cereal with milk.
- Granola mixes with nuts, dried fruits and cereal.
- Bean burritos, refried bean dip.
- Thinly sliced ham or turkey - roll over a bread stick and eat!
- Mini meatballs (use pretzel sticks to spear and eat).
- Hard cooked eggs - remove the shell and eat!



Iron helps to keep blood healthy by carrying oxygen to all blood cells.

Help keep your children healthy by providing high iron food sources throughout the day!



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Nutrition Coalition

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