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Iron-Deficiency Anemia in Pregnancy

You have been diagnosed with iron-deficiency anemia. Iron-deficiency anemia is very common but it requires treatment because it is associated with pre-term birth, low newborn birth weight, maternal postpartum hemorrhage, and vaginal tearing during delivery. To properly treat your anemia you will need to do one or more of the following:

- **Eat a Diet Rich in Iron**

The following foods are rich in iron. Although many of the following vegetable sources contain more iron per serving than the meat sources do, your body will absorb iron from the meat sources easier and at higher levels than it will from the vegetable sources. Please add as many of the following foods as you can to your diet every day. Also, cooking your food in cast-iron cookware will help your food absorb additional iron, making it even more iron-rich! Sea vegetables, such as kelp, seaweeds, and dulse are some of the most iron-rich foods there are. Add them into soups, casseroles, other hot dishes or eat them as snacks.

1 cup prune juice.....	10.5mg of iron	1 cup of black beans.....	7.9mg of iron
1 cup of garbonzo beans....	6.9mg of iron	1 cup of pinto beans.....	6.1mg of iron
1 cup of spinach.....	4.0mg of iron	½ cup of walnuts.....	3.75mg of iron
3 ounces of beef.....	3.0mg of iron	1 cup of beet greens.....	2.8mg of iron
3 ounces of pork.....	2.7mg of iron	1 cup of swiss chard.....	2.6 mg of iron
3 ounces dark meat turkey..	2.0mg of iron		

- **Avoid Drinking Black Teas and Coffee**

Black teas and coffee interfere with your body's ability to absorb iron from food sources and vitamins. Please limit your intake of these drinks or stop drinking them altogether while you are trying to increase your iron levels.

- **Take Herbal and/or Vitamin Supplements**

Iron Supplementation

To get the most out of your iron supplement, we recommend that you do the following:

- Take your prenatal vitamin at mealtimes.
- Twice a day and in between meals, take 30 mg of a food-based iron supplement that is free of fillers, binders, and artificial colors. Ferrous glucinate, ferrous sulfate, and ferrous succinate are forms of supplemental iron that are easily absorbed by the body. Be sure to avoid enteric-coated and time-released iron supplements, since they're poorly absorbed.
- To help your body absorb iron, please take your iron supplement along with the following vitamin-rich foods or supplements:

-Vitamin C
-Vitamin B-12

-Zinc
-Folate

- Avoid eating or drinking calcium-rich foods with your iron supplement because calcium impedes iron absorption.
- Iron supplementation can be constipating. Please increase your fluid intake and the fiber content of your diet while supplementing with iron.

Herbs

You may be able to buy or mix your own iron-rich herbal tea. The following herbs are only several examples of herbs that are high in iron content:

❖ Alfalfa ❖ Nettles ❖ Red Raspberry leaf ❖ Dandelion

❖ ‘Floradix Brand Liquid Iron Supplement’ is another option. It is a liquid supplement that you can find in many food cooperatives or health food stores. It tastes similar to prune juice.

If you wish to use herbal remedies to treat your iron-deficiency anemia we suggest that you do so in coordination with another treatment method listed above. The sole use of herbs to treat anemia, although effective when practiced over a long period of time, may not result in the level of treatment that your body requires within the amount of time that you have to achieve it.