

How to Include Iron-rich Foods in the Infant Diet

Why is Iron Important?¹⁻⁴



Supports growth, brain development, and red blood cell production

After 6 months, breast milk alone doesn't meet iron needs

WHO recommends iron-rich complementary foods from 6 months to prevent deficiency

Iron-rich Food Sources⁴⁻⁶



Animal-based (Heme Iron - better absorbed): red meat, fish, liver, egg yolk

Plant-based (Non-heme Iron): lentils (masoor dal), chickpeas (chana), green leafy vegetable, finger millet (ragi/nachni), fortified cereals, etc.

Boosting Iron Absorption⁶⁻⁸



Pair non-heme iron foods with **Vitamin C sources** (e.g., tomato, lemon) to enhance absorption

Prebiotics (e.g., citrus fruits, banana, apple) help maintain gut health and support iron uptake

Practical Indian Food Combinations⁵



Masoor dal and oats cheela + Tomato chutney



Oatmeal + Mashed banana + Strawberry



Drumstick leaves (Moringa) with moong dal soup + Lemon juice



Palak and methi* roti + curd



Palak and moong dal khichdi



Carrot, apple and moong dal soup



Ragi/nachni and banana porridge

Providing iron-rich complementary feeds from 6 months of age is essential to support optimal infant growth and development.^{1,3,4} Vitamin C and prebiotic-rich foods can enhance iron absorption and gastrointestinal health.⁶⁻⁸