

# IRON

## Infant nutrition

Babies need good foods to get the right nutrients. Nutrients like iron help them grow and develop. Most babies grow fast in the first year of life, up to triple their birth size.

Iron is from both animal and plant foods. It is great to have a variety of iron rich foods. However, iron is best absorbed from animal sources.



## How does iron support infant development?



Body growth and development



Energy



Brain development



Immune System

## Tips for bub having enough iron:

- Start feeding bub iron rich foods, from around 6 months of age.
- Keep the main drink as breastmilk or infant formula until 12 months of age.
- Provide foods from the five food groups each day.
- Vitamin C rich foods help absorb more iron. Try oranges, strawberries, tomatoes, broccoli and capsicum.
- Seek help if you are concerned about your baby's iron intake. An Accredited Practising Dietitian, Child and Family Health Nurse or GP can help.



Birth ~ 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breastmilk or formula</li> </ul>
6 – 7 months Finely mashed or pureed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mashed no added salt baked beans</li> <li>• Iron fortified cereal</li> <li>• Pureed or mashed fruit &amp; vegetables i.e. broccoli and Vitamin C rich fruit like peaches</li> <li>• Minced meat (e.g. beef, chicken, lamb, tuna, chicken)</li> <li>• Pureed meat (grated liver and kidney into other dishes)</li> </ul>
8 – 12 months Mashed, chopped or finger foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finely chopped lean meat, chicken or fish</li> <li>• Boiled/scrambled egg</li> <li>• Wholemeal toast with smooth peanut butter</li> <li>• Finely chopped well-cooked meat with chopped vegetables</li> <li>• Mashed baked beans with wholemeal toast</li> <li>• Scrambled silken tofu or finger pieces of firm tofu</li> <li>• Boneless fish fillet pieces</li> </ul>
12+ months Family foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meat and vegetables casseroles with rice</li> <li>• Cooked meat or chicken strips</li> <li>• Spaghetti Bolognese with beef/lamb/turkey or lentils mince</li> <li>• Lentil patties or soup</li> <li>• Curries</li> <li>• Fish and vegetables</li> </ul>

If you have any concerns about your child, contact your local [Child and Family Health Nurse service](#), [Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service \(AMIHS\)](#), [Building Strong Foundations \(BSF\) for Aboriginal Children, Families and Communities](#), or GP.



Health  
Hunter New England  
Local Health District



HNEkidshealth  
Children, Young People & Families



Healthy Beginnings for HNEKids acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, live and gather, recognising their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging, as well as Aboriginal people who have provided valuable guidance to the development of this project.