

PRENATAL VITAMINS

We recommend that you take a prenatal vitamin daily. Prenatal vitamins may be supplied to you when your pregnancy is confirmed, and are also available over-the-counter. If your provider deems it necessary, a prescription can be provided. Prenatal vitamins can increase nausea in some women. This can be reduced by taking a prenatal vitamin at bedtime, with a small snack.

WHAT ARE THE IRON REQUIREMENTS IN PREGNANCY?

During pregnancy, the need for additional dietary iron is increased to support a 20-30% increase in the blood volume and the needs of the growing baby.

The recommended daily amount (RDA) for pregnant women is 30 mg. Due to the difficulty in meeting the increased needs in pregnancy, iron supplementation is recommended. This supplementation is often included in your prenatal vitamin; however, if you are diagnosed with anemia, or are unable to tolerate your prenatal vitamins, other supplements may be recommended.

To improve absorption of dietary and supplemental iron, take iron or iron-rich foods with a source of Vitamin C. The following is a list of dietary sources of iron:

- Liver
- Beef
- Pork
- Baked beans, soybeans, lima beans, dried beans, or peas
- Apricots
- Enriched breads and cereals
- Figs
- Raisins
- Egg yolks (the whites are a good source of protein)
- Peanuts and peanut butter
- Leafy green vegetables
- Potatoes
- Prunes (also good to help with constipation)

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT CHEMICAL EXPOSURES?

Common chemical exposures include pesticides, cleaning solvents, and heavy metals like lead. Exposure to these chemicals should be limited during pregnancy. Using appropriate protective gear can limit risks.

Additionally, cleaning products, nail polish, and nail polish remover should be used in a well-ventilated area. If you are having the interior of your home painted, you should choose a water-based latex paint and/or paint with low volatile hydrocarbons.