Stronger Bodies with Iron

Iron makes our bodies strong!
✓ Strengthens blood
✓ Builds muscles and brain
✓ Helps body to work properly

Well-balanced diet provides enough iron.

Sources of Iron:
✓ Legumes: beans, peas, lentils
✓ Dark green leafy vegetables: kulitis, talinum, malunggay, pechay, saluyot, kamote tops
✓ Liver, blood and other organ meat
✓ Red meat
✓ Eggs
✓ Whole grain cereals: adlai, purple glutinous rice, brown rice

Iron from animal foods can be easily used by the body.

Lack of iron results in:
✓ Iron deficiency anemia
✓ Reduced physical capacity
✓ General weakness
✓ Reduced alertness and concentration
✓ Pale complexion
✓ Poor resistance to cold temperatures

Iron from plant-based foods is best eaten with animal-based foods or fruits.

Good fruits to eat with iron-rich plant foods are dalandan, kalamansi, dayap, guava, kamias and other local fruits rich in vitamin C.
1 cup of boiled *kulitis* leaves can give:
More than 1/2 of recommended iron intake for following age groups:
> 6-9 years old children, both male and female
> males aged 10-12 years old and 16-29 years old
More than 25% of the recommended daily iron intake for females aged 13 to 29 years old

1 cup of boiled leaves of Japanese malunggay, *katuray* and *saluyot* can provide:
Around 20% of the daily recommended iron intake of children aged 6-9 years old

*Breast milk is the best source of iron for babies under 6 months.*

**Iron for Women**

✓ Women and older girls should have more iron-rich foods because they lose iron during menstruation.
✓ During pregnancy, anemia can cause problems during delivery and hinders the healthy development of the child. Thus, pregnant women are often advised to take supplementary iron.

**Get More Iron**

✓ Eat variety of foods everyday
✓ Eat fruits with or after meals to ensure better use of iron from food.
✓ Do not drink tea or coffee until 1 or 2 hours after meal to prevent reduction of iron absorption.
✓ Drink fresh fruit juice for beverages (*dalandan, santol, kalamansi* juice, *kamias* shake) – Vitamin C assists in iron absorption.
✓ Ensure that women and older girls in household eat plenty of iron-rich foods.
✓ Give iron-rich foods to children 6 months and older. Teach schoolchildren the value of local vegetables as source of nutrients. It helps them learn to eat green leafy vegetables (aside from meat) at an early age.

*Adapted from Healthy Eating Resources, FAO, 2009*