

Get Pumped Up With Iron

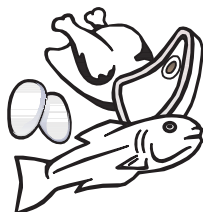
Your body contains less than a teaspoon of iron. Yet for many of us, it is difficult to get enough in our diet. This is especially true for children, adolescents, and menstruating women.

Iron is needed to form hemoglobin which is the part of the blood that carries oxygen throughout the body. When the body doesn't have enough hemoglobin, there is not enough oxygen in the blood. This is why you will feel tired if you don't have enough iron in your diet.

Food sources of iron can be divided into two types: heme and non heme iron. Heme iron is found in meat and non heme iron is found in non-meat foods. Heme iron is easily absorbed by the body while non heme iron will be better utilized by the body if eaten along with a source of vitamin C. So when you drink a glass of orange juice along with a bowl of iron rich cream of wheat in the morning you will boost the amount of iron your body can use.

When you eat non heme sources of iron along with heme sources of iron, you will use more of the iron from the plant foods at that meal.

The amount of iron absorbed from food will also increase if your body stores of iron are low. For example, if you have iron deficiency anemia, your body will use iron in your food more efficiently.



Ten Tips to Boost the Iron in Your Diet

- 1) Include peas, beans and lentils in your menu plan. Add them to soups, casseroles, and salads. Enjoy baked beans and chili.
- 2) Sprinkle wheat germ over your breakfast cereal. Add to muffins and homemade breads.
- 3) Sardines, clams, and oysters are rich sources of iron. Try sardines on a cracker or spaghetti with clam sauce.
- 4) Serve liver pate as an appetizer or snack on whole grain crackers or toast or for lunch on a bagel, bun, or bread.
- 5) Add black strap molasses to muffins, or baked beans to replace some of the sugar.
- 6) Use pot barley to thicken soups and stews.
- 7) Sprinkle currants, raisins, or other dry fruit on your morning cereal. Add to muffins and breads.
- 8) Drink prune juice.
- 9) Make your own granola with whole grain and enriched cereals, dried fruit, wheat germ, and molasses.
- 10) Use a cast iron frying pan to simmer spaghetti sauces, or scramble an egg. Cooking foods in a cast iron frying pan will increase the iron content of the foods.

Some Sources of Iron - Include a variety of iron rich foods everyday.

Excellent Sources of Iron

(3.5 mg or more/serving)

One serving of food in this group will contain 25% of your daily requirement for iron.

Tofu - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup



Liver (pork, beef or chicken) - 3 oz.

Baked beans with pork and tomato sauce - 1 cup



Chili with beans - 1 cup

Clams, canned - 3 oz.

Seeds (pumpkin and sesame) - 1 oz.

Cream of wheat - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Blackstrap molasses - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup

Good Sources of Iron

(2.1 mg or more/serving)

Peas, beans, and lentils - 1 cup



Beef, pork, veal - 3 oz.

Turkey, dark meat - 3 oz.

Granola - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Cooked prunes - 1 cup

Prune juice - 1 cup



Sources of Iron

(0.7 mg or more/serving)

Chicken or turkey - 3 oz.



Egg

Broccoli - 1 spear



Dried apricots - 5 halves

Cashews - 1 oz.

Enriched pasta - 1 cup

Sunflower seeds - 1 oz.

Bread - 1 slice

Parboiled or converted rice - 1 cup cooked

Bran muffin



Tuna or salmon - 3 oz.



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