

Incorporating Iron Into Your Diet

Iron is a vital mineral that helps your body produce hemoglobin, the protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen. Getting enough iron is essential for energy, overall health, and preventing iron deficiency anemia.

Types of Iron and Food Sources

There are Two Types of Dietary Iron

- **Heme Iron** (absorbed more efficiently) – Found in animal-based foods like meat, poultry, and seafood.
- **Non-Heme Iron** (absorbed less efficiently) – Found in plant-based foods like beans, whole grains, and vegetables.

Best Sources of Iron

Heme Iron (Animal Sources)

- Chicken liver, beef liver
- Clams, oysters, shrimp, tuna, salmon
- Lean beef, turkey leg, dark poultry meat
- Eggs (especially yolks)

Non-Heme Iron (Plant Sources)

- Iron-fortified cereals, oatmeal, whole wheat bread
- Beans (kidney, lima, navy, soybeans) and lentils
- Tofu, peanut butter, brown rice
- Leafy greens (spinach, kale, collards, broccoli)
- Dried fruits (prunes, raisins, apricots)
- Seeds and nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts)

Boosting Iron Absorption

- **Pair with vitamin C** – Foods like tomatoes, citrus fruits, and bell peppers help your body absorb iron better.
- **Avoid certain drinks with meals** – Tea and coffee can reduce iron absorption.



Low Iron Levels: Who's at Risk?

- Women (menstruation, pregnancy, postpartum)
- Long-distance runners
- Frequent blood donors
- People with digestive conditions affecting nutrient absorption

Symptoms of Iron Deficiency

- Fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath
- Headaches, irritability, pale skin
- Unexplained weight loss

Can You Get Too Much Iron?

Excess iron from supplements or conditions like hemochromatosis can cause:

- Fatigue, nausea, dizziness
- Grayish skin color
- Shortness of breath

How Much Iron Do You Need?

- **Men (19+ years):** 8 mg/day
- **Women (19-50 years):** 18 mg/day
- **Women (51+ years):** 8 mg/day
- **Pregnant women:** Higher needs—consult a doctor

Iron plays a crucial role in your health—getting enough through a balanced diet is key. If you have concerns about your iron levels, talk to your healthcare provider about the best approach for you!



We're committed to your health. Contact us today for more information.

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