

Eat Iron-Rich Foods to Reduce Anemia

Anemia is a condition where your body lacks healthy red blood cells or is low in hemoglobin, the molecule in blood cells that carries oxygen. **Iron deficiency is a common cause of anemia.**

People with anemia may often feel tired, cold, and dizzy, or have trouble concentrating. Eating iron-rich foods can help people with iron-deficiency anemia build up healthy blood. *See backside for iron content in common foods.*

Vegetables

Spinach, okra, sweet potatoes, winter squash, white potatoes



Beans & Legumes

Dried peas, dried beans, legumes (like lentils and chickpeas), tofu, soybeans



Grains

Iron-fortified whole grain breads and cereals, iron-enriched whole wheat pasta, quinoa, amaranth



Seafood

Shellfish (clams, shrimp, oysters), sardines, anchovies



Meat

Poultry (thighs, drumsticks of chicken and turkey), lean beef, veal, pork, lamb, liver



Other Food

Dark chocolate (at least 62% cacao), nutritional yeast, mixed seeds, almonds, blackstrap molasses



Dried Spices

Dried spices including basil, thyme, cumin, mint, turmeric



1 tsp = about 1.2 - 1.6 mg iron!

Vitamin C-rich Foods

Vitamin C helps our bodies absorb iron.

Fruits

Citrus (oranges, grapefruits), strawberries, cantaloupe, kiwi



Vegetables

Brussels sprouts, broccoli, asparagus, bell peppers, cauliflower, potatoes, spinach, turnips



Limit these foods (below) that lower iron absorption:



Cheese



Milk



Fizzy Drinks



Caffeinated Tea



Zinc Supplements



Coffee

References:

USDA Food Composition Database, <https://ndb.nal.usda.gov/> (accessed 7/23/16)
<https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Iron-HealthProfessional/> (accessed 7/21/16)

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Table of Iron Content in Common Foods

Food	Milligrams iron per serving
Breakfast cereals, 100% iron-fortified, 1 serving	18
Oysters, eastern, cooked with moist heat, 3 ounces	8
White beans, canned, 1 cup	8
Quinoa, cooked, ½ cup	8
Amaranth, cooked, ½ cup	7
Chocolate, dark, at least 62% cacao solids, 3 ounces	7
Beef liver, pan fried, 3 ounces	5
Anchovy, 3 ounces	4
Blackstrap molasses, 1tbsp	4
Lentils, boiled and drained, ½ cup	3
Spinach, boiled and drained, ½ cup	3
Tofu, firm, ½ cup	3
Shrimp, cooked, 3 ounces	3
Clams, cooked with moist heat, 3 ounces	2
Sweet potatoes, boiled, mashed with skin, 1 cup	2
Kidney beans, canned, ½ cup	2
Sardines, Atlantic, canned in oil, drained solids with bone, 3 ounces	2
Chickpeas, boiled and drained, ½ cup	2
Tomatoes, canned, stewed, ½ cup	2
Beef, braised bottom round, trimmed to 1/8" fat, 3 ounces	2
Potato, baked, flesh and skin, 1 medium potato	2
Cashew nuts, oil roasted, 1 ounce (18 nuts)	2
Dried spices (basil, thyme, mint, cumin, and turmeric), 1tsp	up to 1.6
Lamb, ground, cooked, broiled, 3 ounces	2
Nutritional yeast, 4 tbsp	2
Green peas, boiled, ½ cup	1
Chicken, roasted, meat and skin, 3 ounces	1
Rice, white, long grain, enriched, parboiled, drained, ½ cup	1
Bread, whole wheat, 1 slice	1
Spaghetti, whole wheat, cooked, 1 cup	1
Turkey, roasted, dark meat and skin, 3 ounces	1
Pistachio nuts, dry roasted, 1 ounce (49 nuts)	1
Broccoli, boiled and drained, ½ cup	1
Egg, hard boiled, with yolk, 1 large	1
Rice, brown, long or medium grain, cooked, 1 cup	1
Okra, cooked, 1 cup	1
Winter squash, cooked, 1 cup	1
Almonds, 23 kernels, 1 ounce	1
Pork, lean, cooked, 3 ounces	1
Milk, 1 cup (dairy products like milk and cheese do not have iron)	0

Recommended Daily Iron Intake				
Age	Male	Female	Pregnancy	Lactation
Birth to 6 months	0.27 mg	0.27 mg		
7–12 months	11 mg	11 mg		
1–3 years	7 mg	7 mg		
4–8 years	10 mg	10 mg		
9–13 years	8 mg	8 mg		
14–18 years	11 mg	15 mg	27 mg	10 mg
19–50 years	8 mg	18 mg	27 mg	9 mg
51+ years	8 mg	8 mg		

Note: Vegetarians need 1.8 times more iron

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