

SOURCES OF IRON

Iron is a mineral found in many foods. Iron helps deliver oxygen in the blood. There are two types of iron: heme and nonheme. Heme iron is easier for our bodies to absorb and is found in animal products like meat and poultry. Choosing heme sources of iron every day will help you get the proper amount of iron in your diet. Nonheme iron comes from plant sources. It is found in vegetables, grains, and other plant foods.

What foods are good sources of iron (2 mg or more)?

Foods sources of mostly heme iron		
Beef (chuck, ground, rib, round cuts)	3 oz cooked	2 - 3
Beef, liver	3 oz cooked	5
Chicken, liver	1 liver	2
Clams, oysters, sardines	3 oz	2 - 4
Lamb, leg	3 oz cooked	2
Food sources of mostly nonheme iron		
Beans, cooked (baked, black, black-eye, garbanzo, kidney, lima, navy, pinto, soybeans, and white)	1 cup cooked	2 - 9
bagels, English muffins , frozen waffle	1 whole	2 - 4
Cereal, ready-to-eat, fortified Check the label	1 cup	8 - 18
Cereal, cooked, fortified such as oatmeal, cream of wheat, grits, or Malt o Meal	1 cup	10 - 12
Fruit Juice: prune	8 oz	3
Lentils, cooked	1/2 cup	3.3
Spinach	1/2 cup	3.2
Tofu, firm	1/2 cup	2
Tomato, puree, sauce, stewed	1 cup	2 - 4



For increased absorption of iron, eat a food high in vitamin C at the same meal such as: oranges, grapefruit, pineapple, tomatoes, kiwi, strawberries, bell peppers, and broccoli.



Reading Food Labels for Iron:

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (114 g)	
Servings Per Container 4	
Amount per Serving	
Calories 90	Calories from fat 30
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 3g	5%
Saturated Fat 0 g	0%
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 300mg	13%
Total Carbohydrates 13g	
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 3g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A 80%	Vitamin C 60%
Calcium 4%	Iron 4%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie need	
Calories	2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65 g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20 g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300 mg 300 mg
Sodium	Less than 2400 mg 2400mg
Total Carbohydrates	300g 375g
Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	Carbohydrates 4 Protein 4

Serving Size:

Located directly beneath Nutrition Facts. Read the household measure: 1/2 cup.

Servings per Container:

Servings per container are the number of servings that can be found in a box, bottle, bag or package of food. If you ate the whole container, you would need to multiply any of the information on the label by four.

Iron:

Read the percentage amount. The goal is to eat a total of 100% per day.

Example:

For this food label a 1/2 cup serving contains 4% of your daily recommendation of iron.

How much do you need each day?

The Dietary Reference Intake for iron depends on your age and gender:

	Age (years)	Iron (mg)
Men	19+	8
Women	19-50	18
	51+	8
	Pregnancy	27
	Lactation	9

