

FACTS ABOUT IRON-RICH FOODS

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- ❖ There are two different types of iron in food: heme iron, found in red meat, seafood and poultry and non-heme (plant-based foods) iron found in bread, fruits, breakfast cereals, vegetables, legumes (e.g. baked beans), nuts and eggs.
- ❖ Heme iron foods are rich in iron in the form that is easily absorbed by the body. Red meat when eaten together with vegetables can boost the absorption of non-heme iron by up to four times.
- ❖ Avoid eating iron-rich foods along with substances that inhibit the iron absorption: high-bran and un-milled cereals, tea, coffee, red wine, cranberries; rhubarb, spinach, soda, and calcium.
- ❖ Enhance absorption of iron by eating foods rich in Vitamin C at every meal (e.g. citrus fruits, strawberries, red peppers, tomatoes, broccoli, potatoes, watermelon, cantaloupe, cauliflower, and kiwis).

The following list of heme and non-heme foods gives the iron content of selected foods.

Heme Iron Rich Foods			Non-Heme (Plant-based) Iron		
Food	Serving size	Iron Content (mg)	Food	Serving Size	Iron Content (mg)
Beef liver, fried	3 oz	5.3	Baked beans	1 cup	2.8-5.0
Beef, ground, lean	3 oz	1.8	Egg	1	0.7-1.1
Sirloin steak, lean	8 oz	8	Baked Potato, with skin	1	2.8
Pizza (cheese or pepperoni) fast food	½ of 10"	4.5-5.4	Watermelon	6" x 1 ½ " Slice	3
Red Meat	3 oz	4	Banana	1 cup	1
Burrito, beef (fast food)	1	4.6	Strawberries	1 cup	1.5
Taco, beef (fast food)	1	2.9	Dried fruits (dates, figs, apricots)	½ cup	3-4
Hamburger, cheese burger (fast food)	1	2.5	Rice, white enriched	1 cup	2.3
Chicken, lean	3 oz	1.1	Bread (white or wheat)	1 slice	0.5-1.2
Clams, canned	¼ cup	11.2	Cereal, ready to eat, fortified	1 cup	1 to 16
Oysters, cooked	1 oz	3.8	Wheat Germ	½ cup	4
Mussels, steamed	3 oz	11.2	Oatmeal, instant	1 package	6.3
Sardines, canned	3 oz	2.9	Tortilla	1	1
Pork, lean	3 oz	1.5	Burrito, bean	1	2.8
Lamb, lean	3 oz	2.2	Nuts	1/3 cup	0.5-1.2
Braunschweiger sausage	2 oz	5.3	Tofu	4 oz	2.3
Fish and poultry	3 oz	2-3	Dry beans, lentils, lima beans, chickpeas, cooked	½ cup	2-3.4
Soup, beef noodle Soup, lentil and ham	1 cup	2.5	Green leafy vegetables (collard, kale, spinach)	½ cup	2-3
Sole/Flounder	3 oz	0.4	Soybeans, cooked	½ cup	4.4
Cod/Snapper	3 oz	0.3-0.6	Prunes, Raisins	¼ cup	0.9-1.1