

GOOD DIETARY SOURCES OF IRON

Iron is found in a wide variety of foods. Regardless of any dietary restrictions you may have, there are likely many ways to meet your iron needs. Here is a partial list:

MEAT: beef, pork, chicken, turkey, veal, liver, eggs

SEAFOOD: fish, shrimp, clams, oysters, scallops

FRUITS: raisins, strawberries, dried apricots, dried peaches, dates, prunes, watermelon

VEGETABLES/ LEGUMES: dark leafy greens, broccoli, potatoes, beans, lentils, tofu, sun-dried tomatoes

GRAINS: iron-fortified breads and cereals, quinoa, whole wheat

OTHER: dark chocolate, maple syrup, molasses, iron supplements

“ THE MOST COMMON REASON A PERSON IS DEFERRED IS LOW HEMATOCRIT. ”

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT IRON STORES

Donors who give whole blood or an automated donation with red blood cells at least twice a year should consider taking a multivitamin with iron or an iron supplement.

WHY?

Your body needs iron to make new red blood cells to replace those you lose from donating. Donating red blood cells regularly (at least twice a year) can reduce the iron stores in your body.

DOES THE BLOOD CENTER MEASURE MY IRON LEVELS BEFORE I DONATE?

No. The Blood Center measures your hematocrit, which is the percentage of your total blood volume that is composed of red blood cells. Your hematocrit level may be high enough for you to donate, but you could still have low iron stores.

WHAT CAN I DO TO MAINTAIN MY IRON STORES?

Your body can only absorb a limited amount of iron at a time; please talk to your pharmacist or physician about the appropriate type and dose of iron for your body. Eating a diet that includes iron-rich foods can also help your body maintain its iron stores over time.

For more information, visit giveblood.org/iron.

**Gulf Coast Regional
Blood Center**
Commit for Life®