

IRON

More people are deficient in iron than any other nutrient -- not only in the U.S., but in many other countries, both rich and poor. The greatest single cause of iron deficiency is the refining of breads, cereals and sugar.

The body has no way by which it can excrete iron excesses, so most losses are through bleeding, as from hemorrhage or menstruation. Women especially have very little storage of iron because of losses in menstruation. During pregnancy, deficiency is quite common because the baby has first claim on all the mother's nutrients.

Iron pots can go along way in increasing iron. Longer cooking times and acid ingredients will both increase the amount of iron that passes into food cooked in them. For example, spaghetti sauce cooked 3 hours in an iron pot has 29 times as much iron as the same sauce cooked in glass. Scrambled eggs cooked 3 minutes in iron have 2.4 times as much iron as those cooked in glass.

Variety and a well-balanced diet will go along way toward supplying the iron you need. Little amounts from many foods add up. Vegetarians should make a point of using cast iron pots for cooking and be sure to include foods rich in Vitamin C, such as citrus fruits, along with iron-rich foods at every meal.

SOURCES

Non-pregnant Adult RDA is 10-18 mg.

Pregnant Adult RDA is 28-30 mg.

<u>FOOD</u>	<u>mg of IRON</u>
Almonds, 1/2 cup	3.3
Collards, cooked, 2 cups	3.0
Dandelion greens, 1 cup	5.6
Liver, Beef, 2 oz.	4.4
Shrimp, 3 oz.	2.6
Prune Juice, 1 cup	10.5
Black beans, 1 cup cooked	7.9
Garbanzo beans, 1 cup cooked	6.9
Pinto beans, 1 cup cooked	6.1
Navy beans, 1 cup cooked	5.1
Lima beans, dry, 1 cup cooked	5.1
Soybeans, 1 cup cooked	4.9
Lima beans, green, 1 cup cooked	4.3
Lentils, 1 cup cooked	4.2
Spinach, 1 cup cooked	4.0
Peach halves, dried, 5	3.9
Millet, 1/4 cup dry	3.9
Sunchokes, 4 small	3.4

Split peas, green, 1 cup cooked	3.4
Blackstrap molasses, 1 tbsp	3.2
Peas, fresh, 1 cup	2.9
Beet green, 1 cup cooked	2.8
Raisins, 1/2 cup	2.6
Chard, 1 cup cooked	2.6
Dates, 10 medium	2.4
Sesame meal, 1/4 cup	2.4
Tofu, 4 oz, piece	2.3
Tomato juice, 1 cup	2.2
Wheat berries, 1/3 cup dry	2.1
Butternut squash, 1 cup cooked	2.1
Pumpkin seeds, 2 Tbsp	2.0
Wheat bran, 1/4 cup	1.9
Wheat germ, 1/4 cup	1.9
Soybean milk, 1 cup	1.8
Kale, 1 cup cooked	1.8
Prunes, 5 cooked	1.8
Acorn squash, 1/2 baked	1.7
Brussel sprouts, 8 cooked	1.7
Torula yeast, 1 Tbsp	1.5
Strawberries, 1 cup	1.5
Potato, large, cooked	1.4
Oatmeal, 1 cup cooked	1.4

For more information, see **Laurel's Kitchen**, A Handbook for Vegetarian Cookery and Nutrition, By Laurel Robertson, Carol Flinders, and Bronwen Godfrey