

# HEALTHFUL TIPS

## SELECTED SOURCES OF HEME IRON

FOOD	MGS PER SERVING
Chicken liver, 3½ oz.	12.8
Oysters, breaded and fried, 6 PCS	4.5
Beef chuck, lean only, 3 oz.	3.2
Clams, breaded and fried, 6 pieces	3.0
Beef, tenderloin, 3 oz.	3.0
Turkey, dark meat, 3½ oz.	2.3
Beef, eye of round, 3 oz.	2.2
Turkey, light meat, 3½ oz.	1.6
Chicken, leg, meat only, 3½ oz.	1.3
Tuna, 3 oz.	1.1
Chicken, breast, 3 oz.	1.1
Halibut, cooked, 3 oz.	0.9
Crab, blue crab, 3 oz.	0.8
Pork, loin, broiled, 3 oz.	0.8
Shrimp, 4 large	0.7

## SELECTED SOURCES OF NONHEME IRON

FOOD	MGS PER SERVING
Ready-to-eat cereal, 100% iron fortified, 3/4 C.	18.0
Oatmeal, instant, fortified, 1 C.	10.0
Soybeans, boiled, 1 C.	8.8
Lentils, boiled, 1 C.	6.6
Beans, kidney, boiled, 1 C.	5.2
Beans, lima, boiled, 1 C.	4.5
Beans, navy, boiled, 1 C.	4.5
Ready-to-eat cereal, 25% iron fortified, 3/4 C.	4.5
Beans, black, boiled, 1 C.	3.6
Beans, pinto, boiled, 1 C.	3.6
Molasses, blackstrap, 1 TBSP.	3.5
Tofu, raw, firm, 1/2 C.	3.4
Spinach, fresh, boiled, 1 C.	3.2
Black-eyed peas, boiled, 1 C.	1.8
Grits, white, enriched, quick, 1 C.	1.5
Raisins, seedless, packed, ½ C.	1.5
Whole wheat bread, 1 slice	0.9
White bread, enriched, 1 slice	0.9

## Iron Strong

Iron is a mineral essential for life. It is an integral part of oxygen transportation throughout the body and also helps to regulate cell growth and differentiation.

Iron is found readily in many of the foods that we eat. There are two forms of dietary iron; heme iron found in animal food sources and nonheme iron found in plant foods.

If iron intake and absorption do not meet the body's daily need for iron, the negative balance begins to impact the body. Physical symptoms of iron deficiency anemia include fatigue, pale skin appearance, poor work performance, impaired learning ability, decreased immunity—more susceptibility to infection, hair loss, spoon-shaped nails, difficulty maintaining body temperature, glossitis (an inflamed tongue), and a desire to chew on ice or eat nonfood substances such as dirt or clay.

Iron deficiency is not uncommon after weight loss surgery (50% of people may be affected.) for several reasons:

- Less food consumed, fewer vitamins and minerals ingested.
- Red meats, a good source of iron, may not be tolerated.
- Fewer acids in the stomach which help iron to absorb.
- Gastric bypass limits the intestinal area for iron absorption.

## TAKE STEPS TO STAY IRON STRONG

1. Consistently take multi-vitamin and mineral supplements with iron as recommended by your bariatric team. Imbalances or other nutrients can contribute to anemia.
2. Consume foods that are a good source of iron.
3. Attend regular follow up visits and have labs done as recommended to catch low iron levels early.
4. Take a probiotic twice daily. Nature's Bounty Probiotic 10 is a great option. It contains Lactobacillus plantarum 299v which appears to improve iron absorption from foods and supplements.
5. If an iron supplement is recommended, maximize the absorption:
  - Take it on an empty stomach—right before bed is a good time.
  - Select a supplement that contains vitamin C or drink a few ounces of orange juice with your supplement.
  - Don't take your iron supplement with your multi-vitamin, calcium supplement or dairy products. Calcium decreases iron absorption.