



Iron in Foods

What foods have iron?

There are two types of iron found in foods: heme and non-heme. Your body absorbs heme iron more easily than non-heme iron. However, foods containing non-heme iron are also very important sources of iron in your diet. See HealthLink BC File [#68c Iron and Your Health](#) for more information on how much iron you need and how to get the most iron from foods.

Foods with Heme Iron

Food**	Serving	Iron (mg)
Clams	75 g (2 ½ oz)	2.0
*Liver, pork	75 g (2 ½ oz)	13.4
*Liver, chicken	75 g (2 ½ oz)	9.2
Oysters	75 g (2 ½ oz)	6.42
Mussels	75 g (2 ½ oz)	5.0
*Liver, beef	75 g (2 ½ oz)	4.8
Liver pate, canned	75 g (2 ½ oz)	4.1
Beef	75 g (2 ½ oz)	2.4
Shrimp	75 g (2 ½ oz)	2.2
Sardines	75 g (2 ½ oz)	2.0
Lamb	75 g (2 ½ oz)	1.7
Turkey	75 g (2 ½ oz)	1.2
Tuna/herring/trout/mackerel	75 g (2 ½ oz)	1.2
Chicken	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.9
Pork	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.8
Salmon (canned/fresh)	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.5
Flatfish (flounder/sole/plaice)	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.3

* Pregnant women should not eat liver. It has a very large amount of vitamin A, which can be harmful to the baby.

* Liver is high in cholesterol, so people with high blood cholesterol levels should not eat it often.

** All iron values or amounts are for cooked meat, fish, shellfish, and poultry.

Foods with Non-Heme Iron

Food	Serving	Iron (mg)	Food	Serving	Iron (mg)
Infant cereal, dry	28 g	5.6–10.4*	Swiss chard, cooked	125 mL (1/2 cup)	2.1
Pumpkin seeds, kernels, roasted	60 mL (1/4 cup)	8.6	Shredded wheat	30 g	1.8*
Tofu, medium firm or firm	150 g (3/4 cup)	2.4-8.0*	Quinoa, cooked	125 mL (1/2 cup)	1.7
Soybeans, dried, boiled	175 mL (3/4 cup)	6.5	Seaweed, agar, dried	8 g (1/2 cup)	1.7
Quaker® instant enriched oatmeal	1 package	2.8-5.6*	Bagel	45g (1/2)	1.6
Lentils, cooked	175 mL (3/4 cup)	4.9	Prune juice, canned	125 mL (1/2 cup)	1.6
Hummus	175 ml (3/4 cup)	2.9-4.5	Cream of wheat, regular, prepared	175 mL (3/4 cup)	1.5
Enriched cold cereal	30 g	4.0*	Beet greens, cooked	125 ml (1/2 cup)	1.5
Dark red kidney beans, boiled	175 mL (3/4 cup)	3.9	Green peas, boiled	125 mL (1/2 cup)	1.3
Blackstrap molasses	15 mL (1 Tbsp)	3.6	Tomato sauce, canned	125 ml (1/2 cup)	1.3
Spinach, cooked	125 ml (1/2 cup)	3.4	Sunflower seeds, kernels, roasted	60 mL (1/4 cup)	1.2
Refried beans	175 mL (3/4 cup)	3.1	Whole wheat bread	35 g (1 slice)	1.2
Cream of wheat, instant, prepared	175 mL (3/4 cup)	3.1*	Eggs	2	1.2
Soy beverage	250 mL (1 cup)	2.9	Potato, baked, with skin	1 medium	1.1
Wheat germ, ready to eat, toasted, plain	30 g (2 Tbsp)	2.7	Oats, quick or large flakes, prepared	175 mL (3/4 cup)	1.1
Chickpeas, canned	175 mL (3/4 cup)	2.4	Pearled barley, cooked	125 mL (1/2 cup)	1.1
Soybeans, green/edamame (cooked and shelled)	125 mL (1/2 cup)	2.4	Sauerkraut	125 mL (1/2 cup)	1.1
Tahini, sesame seed butter	30 g (2 Tbsp)	2.3	Pasta, enriched, cooked	125 mL (1/2 cup)	1.0
Lima beans, boiled	125 mL (1/2 cup)	2.2	Molasses, fancy	15 mL (1 Tbsp)	1.0

*Note: -Iron amounts in some enriched foods vary; check the label for accurate information. If the iron amount is given as a percentage of the daily value (DV), the standard used is 14 mg (or 7 mg for infant cereals). For example, if a serving of cereal has 25% of the daily value, it has 3.5 mg of iron (0.25 x 14 mg).

For more nutrition information, call 8-1-1 to speak with a registered dietitian.

For more HealthLink BC File topics, visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles/index.stm or your local public health unit.

Click on www.HealthLinkBC.ca or call **8-1-1** for non-emergency health information and services in B.C.

For deaf and hearing-impaired assistance, call 7-1-1 in B.C.

Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.