

IRON A Powerhouse Nutrient for Your Health

Getting enough iron helps:



make red blood cells



transport oxygen throughout the body



support healthy brain development

Your body needs more iron during:

adolescence



childhood



pregnancy



Low iron can lead to **anemia**, a condition where your body makes fewer healthy red blood cells

Did you know?

Low iron levels can:

- affect the baby's development during pregnancy
- lead to developmental delays in young children
- cause fatigue, weakness and low productivity levels in adults

Who is at greater risk of low iron status?



1 in 10 children
aged 3 to 4 have low iron



1 in 4 women
aged 14 to 50 have low iron



Newcomers
to Canada are 2x as likely
to have low iron

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Health Measures Survey 2012–2019 (cycles 3 to 6), ShareFile; Cooper et al. Population Iron Status in Canada: Results from the Canadian Health Measures Survey 2012–2019, Journal of Nutrition 2023 May;153(5):1534–1543.



Health
Canada

Santé
Canada

Canada

Where can you get iron?



lean red meat,
including
wild game



eggs (yolk)



beans, peas,
and lentils



dark green
vegetables



nuts and
seeds



fish and
shellfish



enriched
pasta/bread or
whole grains

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive

Per 1 cup (250 mL)
pour 1 tasse (250 mL)

Calories 110

% Daily Value
% valeur quotidienne

Potassium 450 mg 13 %

Calcium 30 mg 2 %

Iron / Fer 1.5 mg 8 %

*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot
*5% ou moins c'est peu, 15% ou plus c'est beaucoup

You can use the
Nutrition Facts
table to see how
much iron is in
the food



During **pregnancy** you should
take a daily multivitamin
containing iron

Quick tips to improve iron absorption:



- Include a source of vitamin C, like vegetables and fruits. Iron from plant-based foods is harder to absorb than iron from animal sources such as meat, poultry, fish or shellfish.
- Wait 1 to 2 hours after a meal to drink tea or coffee or to take calcium supplements such as antacids. Tea, coffee, and large amounts of calcium reduce iron absorption.



Acknowledgement: This data was made possible by a collaboration between Health Canada and Statistics Canada.

For more information, visit: www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/nutrients/iron.html

Talk to your doctor if you are concerned about your iron status.