

APPENDIX 3. Dietary Sources of Iron

RECOMMENDED DAILY INTAKE (mg/day)			
Men ≥ 19 years	8	Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stay below 45 mg/day for all age groupsVegans/vegetarians should aim for double these amounts because non-heme iron (from plants) is more difficult to absorb than heme iron (from animal protein)Meat, ascorbic acid/vitamin C may enhance iron absorptionCalcium/dairy, tea and phytates (found in whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds) may inhibit iron absorption	
Women 19–50 years	18		
Women ≥ 51 years	8		
Pregnant women	27		
Breastfeeding women	9		
IRON CONTENT IN FOOD			
HEME IRON (mg)		NON-HEME IRON (mg)	
Liver, pork 75 g (2.5 oz)	13.4	Tofu, cooked 0.75 cup	2.4–8.0
Liver, chicken/turkey/lamb 75 g (2.5 oz)	6.2–9.7	Soybeans, mature, cooked 0.75 cup	6.5
Kidney, lamb 75 g (2.5 oz)	9.3	Lentils, cooked 0.75 cup	4.1–4.9
Duck 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.8–7.4	Pumpkin seeds, roasted 0.25 cup	1.4–4.7
Oysters 75 g (2.5 oz)	6.3	Blackstrap molasses, 1 tablespoon	3.6
Mussels 75 g (2.5 oz)	5.0	Peas, chickpeas/black-eye, split, cooked 0.75 cup	1.9–3.5
Liver, beef 75 g (2.5 oz)	4.8	Spinach, cooked 0.5 cup	2.0–3.4
Liver pâté, canned 75 g (2.5 oz)	4.1	Tempeh/fermented soy product, 0.75 cup	3.2
Beef, various cuts 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.4–3.3	Meatless sausage/chicken/meatballs 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.5–2.8
Sardines, canned 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.7–2.2	Tomato puree, 0.5 cup	2.4
Crab, cooked 75 g (2.5 oz)	0.6–2.2	Edamame/baby soybeans, cooked 0.5 cup	1.9–2.4
Ground meat, beef/lamb 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.3–2.1	Tahini/sesame seed butter 2 tablespoons	2.3
Lamb, various cuts 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.3–2.1	Baked beans, canned 0.75 cup	2.2
Clams, canned 75 g (2.5 oz)	2.0	Nuts, without shell 0.25 cup	1.3–2.2
Chicken, various cuts 75 g (2.5 oz)	0.4–2.0	Asparagus, raw 6 spears	2.1
Fish, mackerel/trout/bass 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.4–1.7	Swiss chard, cooked 0.5 cup	2.1
Pork, various cuts 75 g (2.5 oz)	0.5–1.5	Soy yoghurt 0.75 cup	2.1
Eggs, 2	1.4	Oat bran cereal, cooked 0.75 cup	2.0
Tuna, canned in water 75 g (2.5 oz)	1.2	Cream of wheat, prepared 0.75 cup	1.6
Ground meat, poultry/pork 75 g (2.5 oz)	0.7–0.8	Snow peas, cooked 0.5 cup	1.7
Turkey, various cuts 75 g (2.5 oz)	0.3–0.8	Turnip or beet greens, cooked 0.5 cup	1.5–1.7
Seafood, shrimp, scallops 75 g (2.5 oz)	0.2–0.4	Prune juice 0.5 cup	1.6
		Apricots, dried 0.25 cup	1.6
		Beets, canned 0.5 cup	1.6
		Kale, cooked 0.5 cup	1.3
		Oats, quick or large flakes, prepared 0.75 cup	1.3
		Green peas, cooked 0.5 cup	1.3
		Tomato sauce, canned 0.5 cup	1.2
		Sunflower seeds, roasted 0.25 cup	1.2
		Pearled barley, cooked 0.5 cup	1.1
		Potato, baked with skin 1 medium	1.1
		Quinoa, cooked 0.5 cup	1.1
		Sauerkraut 0.5 cup	1.1
		Soy beverage 1 cup	1.0
		Spinach, raw 1 cup	0.9
		Whole wheat bread 1 slice	0.9

Sources: 1) Health Link BC. Iron in foods. Nutrition Series No. 68d. HealthLinkBC Nutrition Series Dec 2016; <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/hlbc/files/documents/healthfiles/hfile68d.pdf>. **2)** Dietitians of Canada. Food sources of iron. Toronto: Dietitians of Canada; 2014. www.dietitians.ca **3)** Dietitians of Canada. Increasing your iron intake. Toronto: Dietitians of Canada; 2010. <https://www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Nutrition-A-Z/Minerals/Increasing-Your-Iron-Intake.aspx>

