

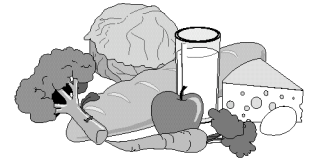
# IRON INDICATOR

Iron is needed by our blood cells to carry oxygen to every cell in our body, including our muscles. Good iron stores are critical for energy and performance.

Vegetarian (non heme) sources of iron are not as well absorbed as the meat (heme) sources of iron. To improve iron absorption, have foods high in Vitamin C (such as oranges, strawberries, mangoes, peppers, cauliflower, cabbage, tomatoes) with your non heme iron foods and avoid tea, coffee, chocolate, and cola at those meals. See [BC Health File #68c Iron and Your Health](#) for more information on how to get the most iron from your food.

## Recommended intakes for individuals for iron in milligrams (mg)/day are:

Age	Males	Females
9-13 years	8 mg	8 mg
14-18 years	11 mg	15 mg
19-50 years	8 mg	18 mg



Here's a handy tool to help you make food choices to help you increase your iron intake. Foods typed in **bold** font contain more easily absorbed heme iron. Foods marked with \* are high in fat or sugar, which may not be desirable for all athletes. Percentages on food labels refer to % Daily Value (DV). The DV is 14 mg iron/day.

0-0.9 mg iron/serving or 0-6% DV	1-1.9 mg iron/serving or 7-14% DV	2-2.9 mg iron/serving or 14-21% DV	3 or more mg iron/serving or > 21% DV
<b>VEGETABLES AND FRUIT</b>	<b>1 Serving = 125 mL (½ c) or equivalent as indicated. Fruits and juices are based on unsweetened varieties.</b>		
All fruit and vegetables (except those listed in another category).	Brussels sprouts, mushrooms, split peas; green peas, snow peas, pumpkin, canned beets, canned cherries, plums; pruned tomato juice; 60 mL dried apricots, currants, figs, prunes, raisins.	Potato baked with skin; lima beans.	15 mL blackstrap molasses. <i>Note: Iron from some vegetables (such as spinach and beets) is not readily absorbed.</i>
<b>GRAIN PRODUCTS</b>	<b>1 Serving = 1 slice bread or 125 mL (½ c) cooked cereal/pasta/rice or 30 g ready-to-eat cereal (check the label for the volume) or equivalent as indicated.</b>		
All bread, dinner rolls or buns; Red River cereal™; puffed or shredded wheat, non-enriched granola*; couscous, pasta, rice; pancake; muffin; ½ English muffin.	Regular (non-enriched) cream of wheat or oatmeal; barley; enriched pasta; frozen pancake or waffle; bran muffin*; ½ bagel.	Quinoa; 2 Tbsp wheat germ; gingerbread from mix.	Enriched hot cereals such as instant cream of wheat or instant oatmeal; enriched cold cereals; bran cereals.
<b>MILK AND ALTERNATIVES</b>	<b>1 Serving = 250 mL (1 c) milk or 50 g (1 ½ oz) cheese or equivalent as indicated.</b>		
All milk products.	Soy-based beverage.		
<b>MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES</b>	<b>1 Serving = 75 g (2.5 oz) cooked, lean meat, fish or poultry (visible fat and/or skin removed) or 175 mL (¾ c) cooked/canned legumes (e.g., kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils) or equivalent as indicated.</b>		
<b>All fish</b> (except those listed in another category); 15 mL <b>liver paté*</b> ; <b>1 wiener*</b> ; 30 mL peanut butter*, 60 mL peanuts.	<b>Bass, herring, mackerel*, pickerel, trout, tuna; veal; pork, ham; lamb; chicken; turkey light meat; duck;</b> 15 mL <b>liverwurst*</b> ; 2 eggs; 60 mL almonds*, brazil nuts*, filberts*, mixed nuts*, roasted soy nuts*.	<b>Sardines; crab, shrimp; ground beef, all beef cuts; turkey dark meat;</b> 60 mL sesame tahini; 60 mL hummus*; 60 mL cashew nuts*, sunflower seeds*.	<b>Clams, mussels, oysters; organ meats (liver, kidney, heart); goat meat;</b> all beans, chickpeas, lentils, soy beans, tofu; 60 mL pine nuts*, pumpkin seeds*.
<b>COMBINATION DISHES</b>	<b>1 Serving = 250 mL (1 c) or equivalent as indicated.</b>		
1 slice pizza*.	<b>Stew*</b> ; macaroni and cheese*; <b>clam chowder</b> ; <b>beef</b> noodle, minestrone, tomato, vegetable <b>beef</b> soup.	<b>Beef or chicken</b> pot pie*; small <b>hamburger*</b> or <b>cheeseburger*</b> ; fast food <b>fish</b> sandwich*.	<b>Beef</b> burrito; deluxe <b>burger*</b> ; pasta with <b>meat</b> sauce; <b>beef</b> sandwich; split pea with <b>ham</b> soup; fortified energy bars (check label).

## EAT WELL

Limit foods and beverages that are high in Calories, fat or sugar and have few other nutrients such as, baked goods, chocolate, candy, ice cream, fries, chips, pop, alcohol, sports and energy drinks, and sweetened hot or cold drinks. You may choose some of these foods in moderation after you have enough servings from the food groups.

To ensure you are getting enough iron, talk to a registered dietitian with expertise in sport. You can contact the dietitian at your [Canadian Sport Centre](#) or someone listed under the [Sport Nutrition Registry](#) on the CAC website. If there is no dietitian with expertise in sport listed in your area, [Dietitians of Canada](#) may list a dietitian near where you live.

