



Why is iron so important for blood donors?

Iron is an essential component of hemoglobin, as it transfers oxygen from the lungs to the tissues. Iron is also necessary for growth and development and normal cellular functioning.

How much Iron do I need?

The recommended daily allowance varies slightly by age and gender however, most adults require approximately 18mg of Iron daily through food sources and/or dietary supplements such as multi-vitamins.

What is Hemoglobin?

Hemoglobin is a protein in red cells which carry oxygen.

What are the guidelines for Hemoglobin in blood donors?

To ensure that people have enough red blood cells after giving blood, the FDA has set a minimum hemoglobin level for male blood donors at 13.0 grams per deciliter and female blood donors at 12.5 grams per deciliter.

What can I do to boost my iron stores?

The richest sources of iron in the diet come from lean meat and seafood, beans, vegetables and fortified grains. Examples of iron rich foods include:



Breakfast cereals
(iron fortified with 100% DV for iron)
= 100% of daily value



Spinach (boiled and drained)
= 17% daily value



Dark Chocolate (3oz)
= 39% of daily value



Lean beef
= 11% daily value

Dietary Supplements

Iron is available in many dietary supplements such as multivitamin/multimineral supplements that contain 18mg iron, which provide 100% of DV recommended.

Recipes to Try

Dark chocolate pomegranate almond bark

- 1 bag – dark chocolate chips
- 1/2 c slivered almonds
- 1/2 c dried pomegranate/cherries

In a bowl combine chocolate chips with 1T vegetable oil. Melt in microwave, 30 seconds at a time until smooth. Add in 1/2 of the almonds and pomegranate and stir to combine.

Pour onto parchment paper covered cookie sheet. Sprinkle with remaining almonds and pomegranate. Place in freezer for 2 hrs. Break into smaller pieces and enjoy!

Iron Rich green smoothie

- 2 cup packed spinach
- 1 cup packed kale
- 2 heaping cups chopped watermelon
- 1 banana
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
- 1/2 tbsp blackstrap molasses

Throw it in a blender and enjoy!

Iron makes strong blood donors!

Stay strong blood donor, we can't wait to see you again soon!

Visit unyts.org or call 512-7940 to make your next appointment or with any questions.