

Donation Sites:

Allentown:

1255 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Ste. 1300
800-223-6667 ~ 610-820-0962

Bethlehem:

1465 Valley Center Parkway
800-223-6667 ~ 610-691-5850

Easton:

2925 William Penn Hwy., Ste. 105
800-223-6667 ~ 610-559-7100

Hazleton:

426 Airport Road
800-223-6667 ~ 570-454-7820

Lionville:

Lionville Shopping Center
128 Eagleview Blvd., A-1B
800-223-6667

Reading:

2745A Leisch's Bridge Road
800-486-2566 ~ 610-926-6060

Call for schedule dates: 800-223-6667

Wind Gap: Plainfield Volunteer Fire Co.
6480 Sullivan Trail

Quakertown: Trinity Evangelical
Lutheran Church
102 N. Hellertown Ave.

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Iron Nutrition for Blood Donors



Proper nutrition is important to maintain your body's normal functions and overall general health. Most of the iron in your body is found in the hemoglobin molecule of the red blood cell, responsible for carrying oxygen to the body. In the past, only the hemoglobin level was tested. Now with new technology, the hematocrit level can be measured. The hematocrit is how much space in the blood is occupied by red blood cells. To donate blood, your hematocrit level must be 38% or higher to assure there are enough red blood cells to benefit the hospital patient.

Two types of dietary iron:

Heme Iron: Heme iron, the organic kind, is found in animal products, especially red meat, liver, and also in poultry and fish. The body can easily absorb approximately 15% of the iron from these sources. Although the absorption of iron from this food group is not affected by other foods in the diet, eating these foods can greatly enhance iron absorption from other sources.

Non-Heme Iron: Non-Heme iron is found in vegetables, fruits, breads and cereals, eggs, nuts and oral iron supplements. Only about 3% of the iron from these sources can be absorbed. How well your body absorbs the iron in these food groups depends on what else is on the menu. Some foods increase iron absorption, while others interfere.

All types of red meat, fish and poultry are excellent dietary sources of iron, since iron from these sources is most easily absorbed by your body.

Most vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans and grains are also good dietary sources of iron, but iron from plant sources such as these is not absorbed efficiently by your body. Vitamin C enhances iron absorption from such plant sources, so eating vitamin C-containing foods in combination with iron-rich vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc. is recommended.

Caffeinated beverages (coffee, tea, soda) taken with meals can act as iron blockers, as might excess consumption of high fiber foods or bran supplements.

How to improve your iron absorption

Eat foods which enhance iron absorption when combined with foods that are non-heme iron sources:

- Beef, poultry, fish, lamb, and veal are on the top of the list.
- Food high in vitamin C, such as citrus fruits, cantaloupes, strawberries and vegetables such as cabbage, green pepper, tomatoes, and broccoli.
- Foods containing folate, a B vitamin, such as vegetables, citrus fruits, liver, beans, and seafood.

Iron Enemies

Avoid combining the following foods with food that are non-heme iron sources:

- Dairy products such as cheese, yogurt, ice cream, and milk.
- Eggs, which contain an anti-iron factor that binds iron, also foods eaten with eggs such as toast.
- Whole-grain breads and cereals, baked goods, and candy bars.
- Foods high in oxalates, such as spinach.
- Tea, coffee, wine, beer, and soft drinks.
- Canned and processed food containing EDTA.

Minimum Daily Dietary Iron Requirements:

Men:	19-50+	10 mg per day
Women:	15-50	18 mg per day
Women:	50+	10 mg per day
Adolescents:	11-18	10 mg per day

