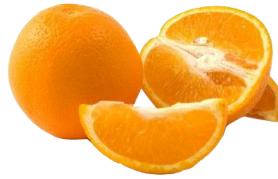


# Iron

Iron is important mineral for athletes as it carries oxygen to different parts of the body to supply those areas. This allows muscles to utilize oxygen during aerobic activities such as swimming, biking or running longer distances. If iron stores are low, less oxygen is able to reach your muscles, which can lead to fatigue and decreased performance. The recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for iron is 8 mg/day for males and 18 mg/day for females.

## Sources of iron (listed from highest content to least):

1. Chicken liver
2. Cream of Wheat
3. Oatmeal
4. Soybeans
5. Oysters
6. Lentils
7. Dried peaches
8. Dried apricots
9. Kidney beans
10. Beef liver
11. Lima beans
12. Iron fortified cereals  
(25-100% of Daily Value)
13. Black-eyed peas
14. Navy beans
15. Black beans
16. Pinto beans
17. Tofu
18. Spinach
19. Pumpkin seeds
20. Quinoa
21. Beef
22. Tuna
23. Turkey
24. Chicken
25. Pork
26. Shrimp



## Foods that increase iron absorption:

- Vitamin C (citrus fruits, bell peppers, kale, potatoes)
- Meat, poultry and fish

## Foods that decrease iron absorption:

- Tannins (tea, coffee)
- Oxalic acid (chocolate, dark leafy greens, wheat bran, nuts)
- Phytates (whole grains)
- Phosovitin (egg yolks)
- Antacids (Tums, Pepcid, Prilosec)
- Phosphates (soda)
- EDTA (preservative in canned vegetables, dressings)
- Certain minerals (calcium supplements, zinc, manganese)



## Ways to add more iron to your routine:

- Add oatmeal or Cream of Wheat to smoothies or shakes.
- Eat meat/poultry/fish with other high iron sources from the list above.
- Sprinkle pumpkin seeds on a salad or in yogurt.
- Add a bean salad or side of spinach to meals.
- Drink orange juice or add orange slices with meals.
- Avoid taking multivitamin supplements with meals or iron supplements.
- Cook in a cast iron skillet/pan.

