



## Nutritional Sources for Iron and Meal Suggestions

### Foods Most Concentrated in Iron from highest to lowest (left to right) :

Lentils, cooked	Pumpkin Seeds
Beet greens, cooked	Kidney beans, cooked
Tahini (Sesame Seed Paste)	Venison
Beef Tenderloin	Chickpeas or Garbanzo Beans
Cashews	Lima Beans
Tomato, Tomato Juices	Pinto Beans
Almonds	Black Eyed Peas
Green peas, cooked	Swiss Chard, cooked
Kale, cooked	Black Beans, cooked
Sunflower Seeds	Turnip Greens, cooked
Broccoli, cooked	Calf's Liver
Brussels sprouts, cooked	Spinach, cooked
Quinoa, cooked	

### Menu Ideas for Food Combining to increase Iron:

- Snack: Hummus made from Garbanzo Beans and Tahini with Black Bean Beanito® Chips
- Soup: Lentil Soup cooked in Chicken Stock with chopped Swiss Chard, Spinach, Kale, Turnip or Beet Greens
- Meal: Quinoa with Black Beans and chopped Venison or Beef Tenderloin topped with Cashews
- Meal: Beef Tenderloin, black-eyed peas with chopped cooked tomato and a side of steamed broccoli.
- Meal: Calves Liver and Onions with roasted Brussels sprouts
- Side: Cold quinoa tossed with cooled cooked beans or peas (any of the above) topped with pumpkin seeds.
- Meal: Add chopped greens, kale or spinach to an organic jarred marinara sauce. Add chopped venison, beef or bison. Put over the top of spaghetti squash.
- Combine pumpkin seeds, cashews, almonds and sunflower seeds together for an iron packed trail mix.
- Salad: Toss spinach with grapefruit segments and olive oil and top with toasted sunflower or pumpkin seeds.
- Side: Cooked green peas tossed in melted butter and the juice of ½ mandarin orange. Top with finely chopped mint leaves.

### Ways to improve absorption:

- Combine the meat options above with the plant options above. For example choose the venison, tenderloin or calves liver and eat it with a bean, lentil, quinoa or green selection.
- Vitamin C can help to improve the absorption of iron from plant sources. Adding citrus fruits to the beans, lentils, quinoa or greens will help absorption. For example, toss orange segments into cooked and cooled quinoa; add toasted cashews and coconut flakes for a light, fresh side dish. Or, use lemon and lime juice as a dressing for bean salads, quinoa salad or greens.
- Avoid consuming caffeinated beverages at the same time you are trying to eat an iron rich meal. Tannic acid in caffeine prevents the absorption of iron.
- Soak lentils before cooking them to reduce the phytates and increase absorption.
- Avoid adding dairy products (cheese, milk, yogurts etc.) to these recipes or meals, as calcium can prevent iron absorption.
- Cooking plant sources of iron releases the iron best. For example, cooked spinach will offer a greater source of iron than raw spinach.