

## What the role of iron?

- Iron is needed to make hemoglobin, which is a part of red blood cells.
- Hemoglobin carries oxygen to muscles and tissues and takes carbon dioxide to the lungs to be exhaled.
- Iron is a part of myoglobin, a protein in muscle.
- Low iron levels may cause fatigue, weakness, and difficulty maintaining body temperature.

## Fill your diet with iron-rich foods!

There are two forms of iron found in foods: heme and non-heme

### Heme iron:

- Used most effectively by your body.
- Found in animal foods, including beef, chicken, turkey, pork, and salmon.

### Non-heme iron:

- Not absorbed as well as heme iron.
- Found in plant foods, including iron-fortified cereal, whole grains, spinach, broccoli, beans (kidney, black, chickpeas, refried, lima, lentils), cashews, prune juice.
- Eat with Vitamin C rich foods (strawberries, oranges, peppers, tomato) to increase absorption.
- Eat with heme iron (meat) to increase absorption.

Lab values of iron	Normal values	Beef, 4 oz.	3 mg
Hemoglobin (Hgb) -amount of Hgb (a protein) in your blood	>13 g/dL	Chicken 4 oz.	1.3 mg
Hematocrit -percentage of whole blood that is made up of red blood cells.	>37.5%	Pork, 3 oz.	1 mg
Ferritin -iron stores	>14 ug/L	Iron-fortified cereal	9-18 mg
<b>Adding up iron throughout the day..</b>		Rice, 1 cup	1 mg
2 hard-boiled eggs	<u>2 mg</u> +	Cooked broccoli, 1 cup	2 mg
Sandwich with 2 slices bread and 3 oz. turkey	<u>3 mg</u> +	Cooked white beans, 1 cup	8 mg
1 cup cooked spinach	<u>6 mg</u> +	Refried beans, 1 cup	4.2 mg
6 oz. pork	<u>2 mg</u> +	Soybean nuts, 1/2 cup	2 mg
2 oz. cashews	<u>4 mg</u> +		
1 oz. dark chocolate	<u>2 mg</u>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>= <u>19 mg</u></b>		

