



IRON

- Iron is essential for transporting oxygen around the body. It also plays a key role in immune function.
- There are two types of iron: haem and non-haem. Haem iron comes from animal foods and is more easily absorbed than non-haem iron, which comes mostly from plant foods.
- Consuming haem iron at the same time as non-haem iron increases non-haem iron absorption.
- Vitamin C (e.g. citrus fruit, tomato, capsicum) increases iron absorption when consumed with iron containing foods.
- Calcium (e.g. dairy foods), tea and coffee, wine and phytates (e.g. wholegrains) hinder iron absorption. Try to consume these foods at alternative times to high-iron foods.

How much do I need?

Women require far more iron than men throughout their reproductive years due to blood loss during menstruation. During pregnancy, iron requirements increase even further. Children and adolescents also have high iron requirements to fuel their growing bodies.

Age	Male (mg per day)	Female (mg per day)
1-3	9	9
4-8	10	10
9-13	8	8
14-18	11	15 <i>(27 if pregnant, 10 if lactating)</i>
19-50	8	18 <i>(27 if pregnant, 9 if lactating)</i>
51+	8	8

What if I don't get enough?

Symptoms of iron deficiency include:

- Tiredness
- Dizziness
- Pale skin
- Breathlessness
- Rapid/irregular heartbeat

High Iron foods

HAEM IRON



Lean red meat
= 2-3mg per
100g (raw)



Canned sardines
= 2.3mg per 100g
(raw)



Salmon = 1.1mg
per 100g (raw)



Pork = 0.7mg per
100g (raw)



Barramundi =
0.6mg per 100g
(raw)



Skinless chicken
breast = 0.4mg
per 100g (raw)

NON-HAEM IRON



Weet-Bix = 3mg
per 2 biscuits



Firm tofu = 2.9mg
per 100g



Wholemeal bread
with grains and
seeds = 2.5mg
per 2 slices



Rolled oats = 2.1mg
per half cup



Eggs = 1.8mg per
2 large eggs



Spinach = 1.6mg
per 50g (raw)



Raw unsalted cashews
= 1.5mg per 30g



Canned chickpeas
= 1.4mg per half cup



Dried apricots
= 0.9mg per 30g



Pepitas
= 3mg per 30g



Chia seeds = 0.8mg
per 10g



Brown lentils = 3.6mg
per 150g (cooked)