

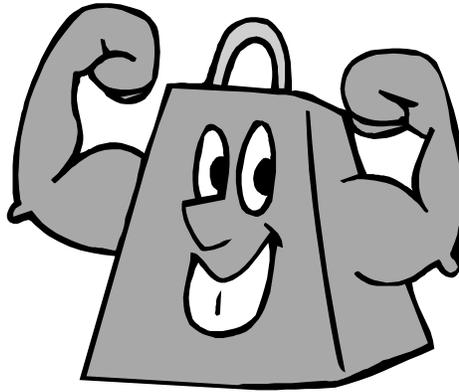
# Smart Choices

## Nutrition News for Seniors

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### Choose Foods with Iron

Iron is a mineral that is important for making red blood cells that carry oxygen through the body. Our cells use oxygen to make energy from the food we eat. Iron is also needed to keep the immune system healthy and to help brain cells work normally. Getting enough iron in your diet may help you feel like you have more energy and help you resist infections.



Iron deficiency is the most common nutritional deficiency in the world. Severe iron deficiency can lead to one type of anemia. This is a condition in which the body does not have enough healthy red blood cells. Iron deficiency can be caused by:

- not getting enough iron in the diet
- not absorbing iron properly
- losing blood from injury or illness

Signs of iron deficiency include:

- Fatigue
- Infections
- Muscle weakness
- Lack of ability to concentrate

You can ensure that you get enough iron by eating foods that are good sources of the mineral.

You can also eat foods fortified or enriched with iron. Both animal and plant foods contain iron, but our bodies absorb the iron from meats better than from plants. To help increase the amount of iron that is absorbed from plant foods, eat them with a food high in vitamin C, such as oranges, strawberries and peppers, or with meat, poultry or fish.

Good food sources of iron include:

- Liver
- Lean meat
- Poultry and fish
- Dried beans and peas
- Tofu
- Green leafy vegetables
- Raisins
- Whole-wheat bread

Foods commonly fortified or enriched with iron include:

- Iron-fortified, ready-to-eat breakfast cereals

- Iron-fortified oatmeal
- Enriched grits
- Enriched breads

Not everyone needs an iron supplement. Your doctor may recommend a supplement with iron when diet alone cannot provide enough iron to maintain a healthy level. You should only take an iron supplement if your doctor recommends it.

It is unlikely that you will get too much iron from foods. However, it is possible to get too much from supplements. Be sure to keep supplements out of the reach of children because an overdose of iron can be fatal.

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# Easy Skillet Meal

Makes 6 1-cup servings

- 1 (10 ounce) package frozen collard greens, spinach or broccoli
- 2 (16 ounce) cans no salt added stewed tomatoes
- 1 cup cooked brown or white rice
- 1 can white beans, rinsed and drained
- Pepper to taste

Steam the collard greens (or spinach or broccoli) in the stewed tomatoes using a large skillet or electric skillet over medium-high heat. Cook for 10 to 20 minutes or until tender. Stir gently. Add the rice, canned beans and seasoning. Cook until heated through.

Adapted from University of Connecticut Family Nutrition Program



| Nutrition Facts                                                                                                                    |                      |                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Serving Size 1 1/2 cups, 1/4 of recipe (453g)                                                                                      |                      |                            |
| Servings Per Container                                                                                                             |                      |                            |
| Amount Per Serving                                                                                                                 |                      |                            |
| <b>Calories 260</b>                                                                                                                | Calories from Fat 10 |                            |
| % Daily Value*                                                                                                                     |                      |                            |
| <b>Total Fat 1g</b>                                                                                                                | <b>2%</b>            |                            |
| Saturated Fat 0g                                                                                                                   | 0%                   |                            |
| Trans Fat 0g                                                                                                                       |                      |                            |
| <b>Cholesterol 0mg</b>                                                                                                             | <b>0%</b>            |                            |
| <b>Sodium 55mg</b>                                                                                                                 | <b>2%</b>            |                            |
| <b>Total Carbohydrate 50g</b>                                                                                                      | <b>17%</b>           |                            |
| Dietary Fiber 12g                                                                                                                  | 48%                  |                            |
| Sugars 9g                                                                                                                          |                      |                            |
| <b>Protein 13g</b>                                                                                                                 |                      |                            |
| Vitamin A 90%                                                                                                                      | Vitamin C 70%        |                            |
| Calcium 25%                                                                                                                        | Iron 40%             |                            |
| *Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs: |                      |                            |
|                                                                                                                                    | Calories             |                            |
|                                                                                                                                    | 2,000                |                            |
|                                                                                                                                    | 2,500                |                            |
| Total Fat                                                                                                                          | Less Than 65g        | 80g                        |
| Saturated Fat                                                                                                                      | Less Than 20g        | 25g                        |
| Cholesterol                                                                                                                        | Less Than 300mg      | 300 mg                     |
| Sodium                                                                                                                             | Less Than 2,400mg    | 2,400mg                    |
| Total Carbohydrate                                                                                                                 | 300g                 | 375g                       |
| Dietary Fiber                                                                                                                      | 25g                  | 30g                        |
| Calories per gram:                                                                                                                 |                      |                            |
|                                                                                                                                    | Fat 9                | Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4 |

## How Much Iron Do You Need?

| Life Stage        | Iron (mg/day) |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Men, Ages 19 +    | 8             |
| Women, Ages 31-50 | 18            |
| Women, Ages 51 +  | 8             |

Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for iron.



## What's the Purpose of SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP is about helping people with limited incomes improve their nutrition for better health and disease prevention. The program is available to all eligible persons.

Food Stamp coupons have been replaced by an electronic SNAP card that looks and works just like a typical debit or credit card used by any grocery shopper. No one but you and the grocery check-out clerk will know you are using SNAP. This program can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact 1-888-LA HELPU or visit [www.dss.state.la.us](http://www.dss.state.la.us).



In accordance with Federal law and U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 225-219-0351 or 1-888-LA HELPU (1-888-524-3578).

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References: Medline Plus; CDC