

LEICESTERSHIRE NUTRITION AND DIETETIC SERVICE

DIETARY SOURCES OF IRON

Anaemia can result from a lack of iron in the diet.

To increase the absorption of iron

Iron absorption is increased when Vitamin C is included with meals. Ensure that you have vegetables, fruit or fruit juice at meal times. Avoid drinking tea or coffee with your meal, as this decreases iron absorption.

Iron from animal sources is absorbed well by the body.

The best sources of iron are:

MEAT	Especially offal (liver*, kidney, heart, tongue) and red meat.
FISH	Tinned salmon, sardines, pilchards, tuna.
EGGS	Especially the yolk.
MEAT EXTRACTS	Bovril, Oxo

Other good sources of iron are:

BREAD & FLOUR	Wholemeal bread and flour, Mighty White bread, chapattis made with No.2 or No.3 flour.
BREAKFAST CEREALS	Look for cereals fortified with iron, especially Special K, Bran Flakes
VEGETABLES/PULSES	All dark green leafy vegetables. Beans, peas, lentils
NUTS	
DRIED FRUIT	Prunes, figs, apricots
YEAST EXTRACTS/ VEGETABLE STOCK	Marmite Vecon
FORTIFIED FOODS	Some foods are fortified with iron – bread, breakfast cereals, tinned pasta shapes. Look at labels.

*Although liver is rich in iron, it should not be eaten if you are or may be pregnant – due to its high Vitamin A content.

To meet iron requirements, the following points of iron should be taken daily:-

1 point = 1mg iron

points/mg iron required

Males

11-18 years	11
19+ years	9

Females

11-50 years	15
50+ years	9

The following list of foods will help you meet your requirement.
The foods are per 50g (2oz) unless otherwise stated.

Food	Iron points
*Liver, cooked	5
*Liver pate	3
Roast beef/corned beef	1
1 boiled egg	1
Sardines canned in tomato sauce	2
Wholemeal bread (per slice)	1
Special K (per 30g serving)	7
Bran Flakes (per 30g serving)	6
Baked beans/frozen peas	1
Lentils, cooked	2
Dark green vegetables	0.5
Dried apricots	2
HP tinned pasta shapes	1
Tofu	0.5
Peanuts dry roasted	1

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