Iron and Heavy Bleeding

Dealing with heavy menstrual bleeding can take a real toll on your energy. When your body loses extra blood each month, it loses iron, the essential mineral needed to manufacture healthy red blood cells that deliver oxygen from your lungs to all your tissues. Aim for 15-18 mg per day. Ask your doctor about iron supplementation for additional support.

Iron-Rich Foods

🥩 Meats & Animal Proteins

Canned Clams (3 oz): 23.8 mg
Oysters (3 oz): 13.2 mg
Chicken Liver (3 oz): 10.8 mg
Beef Liver (3 oz): 5.2 mg
Veal or Lamb (3 oz): 3.0 mg
Pork (3 oz): 2.7 mg
Shrimp (3 oz): 2.6 mg
Ground Beef (3 oz): 2.2 mg
Turkey, Dark Meat (3 oz): 2.0 mg
Fish, Canned Tuna (3 oz): 1.3 mg
Chicken Breast (3 oz)
Turkey, Light Meat (3 oz): 1.1 mg
Large Egg (1): 1.0 mg

🌱 Beans & Legumes

Soybeans (½ Cup): 4.4 mg
Lentils (½ Cup): 3.5 mg
Tofu, Firm (½ Cup): 3.4 mg
Kidney, Lima, Navy, or Canned White Beans (½ Cup): 2.6 – 3.9 mg
Soy Milk (2 Cups): 2.7 mg
Veggie or Soy Burger (1 Patty): 2.9 mg
Black, Pinto, Great Northern, or Garbanzo Beans (½ Cup): 1.6 – 1.8 mg

🥜 Nuts & Seeds

Pine Nuts or Cashews (1 oz): 1.6 mg
Almonds or Pistachios (¼ Cup): 1.3 mg
Walnuts or Mixed Nuts (1 oz): 1.0 mg

🌾 Grains & Fortified Foods

Iron-fortified cereal (⅔ Cup): 7.0 mg
Cream of Wheat (½ Cup): 5.2 mg
Oatmeal (½ Cup): 5.0 mg
Instant/Prepared Grits (½ Cup): 1.0 mg
Bagel (4 in): 3.1 – 5.4 mg
Pumpkin Seeds (1 oz): 4.2 mg
Pretzels (2 oz): 3.1 mg
Biscuit (4 in): 2.9 mg
English or Bran Muffin: 2.3 mg
Enriched Egg Noodles (½ Cup): 1.2 mg
Wheat Germ (2 tsp): 1.1 mg
Pita (4 in. round)

🥬 Greens & Vegetables

Spinach (½ Cup cooked or 1 Cup raw): 3.0 mg
Swiss Chard (½ Cup): 2.0 mg
Brussel Sprouts (½ Cup): 2.0 mg
Potato, Baked with skin on (medium): 1.9 mg
Sauerkraut, canned (½ Cup): 1.7 mg
Beets, Canned (½ Cup): 1.5 mg
Mushrooms (½ Cup): 1.4 mg
Tomato Sauce (½ Cup): 1.3 mg
Collards or Beet Greens (½ Cup): 1.2 mg
Peas, Frozen (½ Cup): 1.2 mg
Sweet Potato, Baked with skin on (medium): 1.1 mg

Did You Know?

1. Vitamin C is iron's best friend! Pair iron-rich plant foods like beans, lentils, spinach, and fortified cereals with citrus fruits, bell peppers, tomatoes, or strawberries to help your body absorb more iron.
2. Tea and coffee can interfere with iron absorption. Their natural compounds can reduce absorption of plant-based iron when consumed with meals. Try enjoying them between meals instead.
3. Cast-iron cookware can add iron to your food! Cooking in cast-iron pans can increase the iron content of certain foods, especially acidic dishes like tomato-based sauces.
4. Calcium timing matters. Calcium from foods and supplements can temporarily reduce iron absorption. Space out your iron and calcium.
5. Not all iron is absorbed equally. Iron from meat, poultry, and seafood is generally more easily absorbed than the iron from plant foods. Mix up your iron sources when you can.

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