



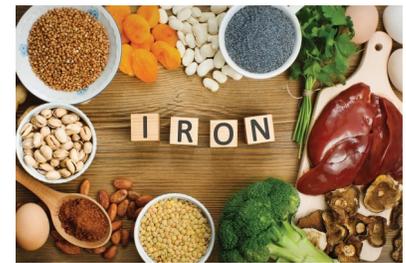
You will receive from us packets of iron supplements and multivitamins. Take one of each daily. Continue taking the supplements until two weeks after your donation. If you run low, notify your Coordinator. We will happily send more.

If you are already taking multivitamin or iron supplements, continue with your own supplements. You do not need to switch products. Do not “double up” on vitamins or other supplements. You might do more harm than good if you take more than your recommended dose.

Iron is an *essential element*, which means that you need regular small doses of it to survive.

Iron occurs naturally in plants and animals, so some people can meet their need by eating a diverse diet. Some people must take supplemental iron, usually as pill or liquid, to meet the recommended intake levels.

Iron performs several functions within your body: It is part of hemoglobin, which carries the oxygen in your red blood cells. It is also part of myoglobin, a protein in your muscles. Additionally, iron is important in neurotransmission, connective tissue, and immune function.



Your iron intake needs will depend upon your age, sex, health status, and other conditions. If you have a medical condition that causes blood loss (ex: ulcer) or you exercise intensely, you may need more-than-the-usual amount of iron.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Daily Iron Intake (mg/day)</b>
<b>Males</b>	
14-18 years	11
19 years +	8
<b>Females (Not pregnant, lactating)</b>	
14-18 years	15
19-50 years	18
51 years +	8

Frequent blood donors may have low iron levels because they are regularly losing large quantities of iron-rich red blood cells. Bone marrow donation is a blood-heavy process. You may be asked to provide several sets of blood tubes for testing, along with an autologous unit of blood (which will be returned to you following donation). Donation itself may involve some blood loss. In order to prepare for and off-set these losses, it is best to have your body's iron supplies well stocked.

Table from Current Dietary Allowances; Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, National Academies

Supplements can be taken with or without food. While iron supplements are best absorbed on an empty stomach, they can also cause stomach upset (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation). You may be able to alleviate the side-effects by taking your iron supplement with a meal or large glass of water, or trying a lower-dose iron supplement.

Certain substances may enhance or hinder your body's ability to absorb the iron. Vitamin C-rich foods may help with absorption. Avoid taking your iron supplement with milk, caffeinated beverages, or high-fiber foods. Because calcium can interfere with iron absorption, you should not take your iron supplement at the same time as an antacid or calcium supplement.

If you have any issues, call your Coordinator. For more information, please see the National Institutes of Health fact sheets at: <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/list-VitaminsMinerals/>