

## **NON-MEAT IRON RICH FOODS**

Iron can be found in two forms when it comes to food, namely heme and non-heme. Heme iron is primarily found in animal products, whereas non-heme is not properly absorbed by the body and needs vitamin C for optimum absorption.

It is observed that non-heme iron is not easily absorbed by our body as heme iron, thus the RDI for vegetarians and vegans is 1.8 times higher than it is for the meat-eaters. If you are vegetarian and are looking for food rich in iron here are 12 food items that are filled with iron and will fight your iron deficiencies.

## **Veg & Non-Veg Foods That Are Loaded With Iron**

### **1. Soybean**

Soybeans and foods which are derived from soybeans like tofu, natto, and tempeh are known to be rich in iron. One cup of soybeans contains 8.8 mg of iron or 49% of the total RDI. Natto is a fermented soybean product that offers 15mg of iron.

Similarly, 170 grams of tofu and tempeh offer around 20% of the RDI of iron. Along with iron, soybeans and soy products are also rich in protein and are also a good source of magnesium, calcium, and phosphorous.

### **2. Lentils**

Lentils are known to be another iron-rich food that provides 6.6 mg of iron per cup. This constitutes around 37% of the recommended daily intake of iron. Lentils are great to include in your diet as they also provide a significant amount of protein, complex carbs as well as fiber.

### **3. Beans and Peas**

Other than soybeans and lentils, red kidney beans, white beans, lima beans as well as navy beans are good sources of iron. These beans offer around 4.4-6.6 mg of iron per cup of cooked beans. Along with these beans, chickpeas and black-eyed peas are also rich in iron. They provide around 4.6-5.2 mg per cooked cup.

Along with iron, beans and peas are splendid sources of potassium, manganese, folate, and many other plant compounds that are beneficial for the body. Consuming beans and peas also helps to solve problems related to blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels.

## 4. Sesame, Pumpkin, Hemp, Flax, and Garden Cress Seeds

Seeds are also great when it comes to consuming vital body nutrients. The **seeds of pumpkin**, sesame, hemp as well as flax are plentiful when it comes to iron. They contain around 1.2-4.2 mg per two tablespoons which comprises around 7–23% of the RDI. Garden cress seeds are a rich source of iron as well as vitamin C and folic acid.

Products like tahini (a paste made from sesame seeds) contain around 2.6 mg of iron. Similar is the case with hummus which is a paste made from chickpeas.

Seeds contain a significant amount of plant protein, fiber as well as **calcium**, and magnesium. They are also great antioxidants that are rich in omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids as well.

## 5. Cashews and Pine Nuts

Nuts and products derived from nuts like “nut butter” contain some amount of non-heme iron. Non-heme iron can be found in almonds, cashews, pine nuts as well as macadamia which contain iron between 1-1.6 mg per ounce.

However, one should keep in mind that these nuts should be consumed raw. Roasting may damage the nutritional value of the nuts. Thus it is best to consume them in their natural form. Nuts also have proven to be a great source of protein, good fats, and vitamins.

## 6. Green Leafy Vegetables

When we talk about iron-rich vegetables, green leafy vegetables are the best source of iron for your body. Green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, fenugreek, lettuce, dill provide approximately 2.5-6.4 mg of iron which comprises around 14-36% of the RDI.

100 grams of spinach contains 1.1 times more than the same amount of red meat and salmon. Along with iron, green leafy vegetables also contain potassium and sodium in high quantities which are essential for the body. Other green vegetables include broccoli, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts which contain 6-10% of the RDI.

Cooking leafy greens with tomatoes or adding lemon will improve the absorption of non-heme iron in Tomato. Tomatoes when consumed raw don't contain a significant amount of iron, it is just about 0.5 mg per cup. However, concentrated tomatoes offer a much greater amount of iron.

Thus, products like tomato paste and tomato sauce offer a higher portion of iron. Sun-dried tomatoes are also a significant source of iron. Apart from iron, tomatoes are also a great source of vitamin C which helps in increasing the non-heme iron absorption. They are a great source of lycopene as well.

## 7. Potatoes

Potatoes contain a significant amount of iron as it is mostly concentrated in their skins. A large unpeeled potato provides 3.2 mg of iron. Potato skins also have a great flavour and are a treat to your taste buds when cooked with the right spices.

Sweet potatoes contain slightly less when compared to normal potatoes. Potatoes are also a great source of fiber as well and cover your daily requirement of vitamin C, B6, and potassium.

## 8. Mushrooms

There are a lot of varieties of mushrooms that are available for consumption. In these only a selected few iron in them. As per a [study](#), One cup of mushrooms contains approx. 2.7 mg of iron.

Certain types of mushrooms like oyster mushrooms or portobello mushrooms contain higher iron content than other types of mushrooms.

## 9. Olives

Olives are actually a fruit more than a vegetable. They contain a good iron content. Olives contain 3.3 mg of iron per 100 grams. Olives are healthy as they contain other nutrients and vitamins as well like fiber, Vitamin A, and E. Consuming olives also helps to reduce the risks of encountering heart diseases.

## 10. Mulberries

Mulberry is a sweet and sour fruit that has a great nutritional value. Mulberries are full of iron and also contain a good amount of vitamin C which is very necessary for the body. Consuming one cup of mulberries can provide around 2.6 mg of iron per cup.

## 11. Whole grains

Whole grains like oats, [quinoa](#), hulled wheat, and amaranth are whole grains that are rich in iron. Along with iron, these grains are also rich in fiber which helps the body in digesting them better.

## 12. Red Meat

Red meat is both filling and healthy, if consumed in moderation. A 3.5-ounce (100-gram) portion of ground beef contains 2.7 milligrams of iron or 15% of the daily value. This Meat also contains a lot of protein, zinc, selenium, and B vitamins.

As per the [study](#), Iron deficiency may be less common in those who consume meat, poultry, and fish on a daily basis, according to researchers. In fact, red meat is likely the single most easily accessible source of heme iron, making it a potentially crucial food for persons who are prone to anaemia.

## 13. Turkey

It is said that black turkey flesh has abundance of iron content. According to **research**, a 3.5-ounce (100-gram) serving of dark turkey meat provides 1.4 milligrams of iron, which is 8% of the DV.

As a result, eating high-protein foods like turkey may help you lose weight since protein makes you feel full and increases your metabolic rate after a meal.

## 14. Fishes

Fish is an incredibly nutritious ingredient, with certain varieties, such as tuna, being especially high in iron. In truth, a 3-ounce (85-gram) serving of canned tuna contains about 1.4 milligrams of iron, which is about 8% of the daily intake.

Fish is also abundant in omega-3 fatty acids, a type of heart-healthy lipid associated with a number of health benefits. According to research, Omega-3 fatty acids, in particular, have been shown to aid brain health, increase immune function, and promote healthy growth and development. Haddock, mackerel, and sardines are also iron-rich fish that can be incorporated into your diet in addition to tuna.

## Summary

Proper intake of iron is very imperative for a human body as it is directly related to the hemoglobin which creates healthy red blood cells. Lack of iron in the body can lead to many serious illnesses as well as health problems. In order to maintain a healthy lifestyle, it is important to keep your body nourished with sufficient iron.

Consuming the above-given food items will definitely help in reducing any iron deficiencies you might have, as well as help maintain the level of iron in your body.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### 1. What vegetarian food is high in iron?

Non-heme iron can be found in dried beans and legumes, dark green leafy vegetables, dried fruits, nuts and seeds, and wholegrain cereals and breads for vegans. Hemoglobin is a protein found in red blood cells that transports oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body.

### 2. How can a vegetarian increase iron level quickly?

A vegetarian can increase their iron level faster by pairing foods smartly. For example, if you are having Palak ki dal (lentils with spinach) then have a citrus fruit post the meal, to help enhance iron absorption from the green leafy vegetable.

### 3. What food is highest in iron?

- Foods richest in iron are:-
- Red meats

- Offal (liver, kidney, pate)
- Poultry
- Fish
- Eggs

#### **4. Is Pomegranate rich in iron?**

One of the greatest fruits for increasing your blood count is pomegranate. It's high in iron, as well as vitamins A, C, and E. The ascorbic acid in this fruit helps to regulate blood count by increasing iron levels in the body. As you incorporate pomegranates into your daily diet, you will notice an increase in haemoglobin levels.

#### **5. Are Bananas high in iron?**

The iron level of banana fruit is sufficient for persons suffering from anaemia. 2 bananas (about 100g) Anemia or a lack of red blood cells can be overcome on a daily basis.

#### **6. Do almonds have an iron?**

Almonds are a good source of iron as well. They're fantastic as part of a balanced diet, but because they're also heavy in calcium, they might not do much to boost your iron levels.

#### **7. Is beetroot high in iron?**

Iron, a key component of red blood cells, is abundant in beets. Red blood cells cannot transport oxygen around the body without iron. Iron deficiency anaemia is a condition that occurs when a person's iron levels are low. Including iron-rich foods in one's diet can help to lower the likelihood of developing this illness.

#### **8. How can I increase my iron naturally?**

Adding Leafy greens which are naturally high in vitamins and minerals including folate and iron, making them an excellent food for treating anaemia and iron deficiency.

#### **9. How can I raise my iron levels quickly?**

Increase the frequency of consuming leafy greens, poultry and seafood to increase the levels of iron in the body. You may also consume iron supplements, prescribed by the doctor to fulfill your daily iron requirements intake.

#### **10. Do cucumbers have a lot of iron?**

Cucumbers have a decent iron content. 100 grams of cucumber contains 0.28 mg of iron.

#### **11. Is Carrot rich in iron?**

Carrots are high in iron, particularly non-heme iron, as well as a good source of vitamin C. In addition they have Vitamin A and beta-carotene.

## **12. Does jaggery contain iron?**

Iron content in jaggery is roughly 11 milligrammes per 100 grammes, or around 61 percent of the RDI (2). Although this seems great, it's unlikely that you'd consume 100 grammes of jaggery in a single session. A tablespoon or teaspoon is a more realistic serving size. A tablespoon (20 grammes) of iron contains 2.2 milligrammes, or roughly 12% of the RDI.

## **13. What is the fastest way to cure anemia?**

If you have iron-deficiency anaemia, the fastest way to raise your iron levels is to take iron orally or have iron delivered intravenously with vitamin C. Iron is required for the production of haemoglobin in red blood cells, which enables RBCs to transport oxygen to organs and other bodily tissues.