

What you need to know before you donate.

Good Dietary Sources of Iron

Breads:

Enriched breads
Iron-fortified cereal
Whole-grain breads

Fish/Seafood:

Clams
Oysters
Sardines
Scallops
Shrimp
Tuna

Fruits:

Dates
Dried apricots
Dried peaches
Dried prunes
Raisins
Watermelon

Meats/Poultry:

Chicken
Eggs
Ham
Liver
Liver sausage
Meat (lean pork and lean beef)
Turkey
Veal

Vegetables:

Beets
Dried beans
Dried peas
Leafy greens
Spinach

Other:

Wheat germ
Blackstrap molasses

- The average adult female requires 18 milligrams of iron a day, while the average male requires 10 milligrams.
- You should normally eat a balanced diet that includes iron-rich foods. But at a minimum, please adjust your diet for at least one week prior to donating blood to minimize the risk of being deferred.

Twenty-five percent of all potential blood donors in the Gulf Coast Region are temporarily deferred because they have a low iron count. Food and Drug Administration guidelines require that any person be deferred if their count is less than 38 percent (i.e. if the packed red blood cells, which carry the iron, make up less than 38 percent of the total blood volume).

“The most common reason a person is deferred is low iron count.”

Remember:

- Tattoo and piercing deferral - one week (if in licensed TX facility)
- Bring a picture I.D.
- You MUST be at least 17 years old, weigh 110 lbs. and be in good health to donate blood; or 16 years old, 122 lbs. and have a consent form signed by parent or guardian. (whole blood only)
- Eat a hearty meal at least one hour before donating.
- Drink at least ONE 16-ounce bottle of water prior to donating.
- Get a good night's sleep prior to donating.
- IRON BOOST - Eat fortified cereal, red meat or green, leafy vegetables.
- ***One unit of blood can save up to three lives!***

If you have eligibility questions, you may confidentially call our Donor Acceptability Department, (713) 791-6654.



Gulf Coast Regional
Blood Center
www.giveblood.org
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