

# SUGGESTIONS FOR THE BLOOD DONOR FOR A DIET HIGH IN NATURAL IRON CONTENT

The following is a list of the 4 BASIC FOOD GROUPS and the foods which are high in iron content or are helpful in iron absorption.

## GROUP I: **Meat and Meat Substitutes**

- Excellent Sources of Iron  
LEAN RED MEATS (Beef, Lamb, Pork, Veal)  
Organ Meats (Liver, Gizzards)  
Poultry  
Eggs  
Seafood  
Nuts  
Beans (Dried Peas, Dried Beans)

## Group II: **Vegetable/Fruit Group**

- Good Sources of Iron  
Vegetables (Dark Green Leafy Vegetables)  
Beans (Green, Lima, Peas)  
Roots (Beets, White Potatoes)  
Cauliflower  
Sprouts (Bean, Alfalfa)  
Artichokes  
Fruits (Dates, Prunes, Raisins)
- Good Sources To Increase Iron Absorption  
Citrus Fruits (Oranges, Lemons, Limes)

## GROUP III: **Breads and Cereals**

- Enriched, fortified and whole grain breads and cereals are often high in iron content (check package contents).
- Grains (Wild Rice, Oats, Wheat, Bran, Macaroni)

## GROUP IV: **Milk and Dairy**

- Good Sources of Iron  
Molasses (Blackstrap)  
Brewers Yeast (Dried)  
Chocolate
- Poor Sources of Iron \*  
Milk  
Cheeses  
Ice Cream  
Yogurt

\* While these foods hinder the absorption of iron, they are good sources for calcium. **Foods containing calcium and calcium supplements(TUMS) should not be used one hour before or one hour after the ingestion of iron supplements.**

### Helpful Hints:

- The intake of high fiber, cellulose foods (celery), caffeine (coffee, tea, cola), and anti-acid medications decrease iron absorption.
- Absorption of the iron occurs in the upper part of the small intestine within four hours after eating. Since the body appears unable to control its resources of iron by selective secretion, it is very important to add these high iron foods to your diet in order to keep your iron level adequate for donation.
- The best rule is to eat regular nutritionally balanced meals and drink plenty of fluids.