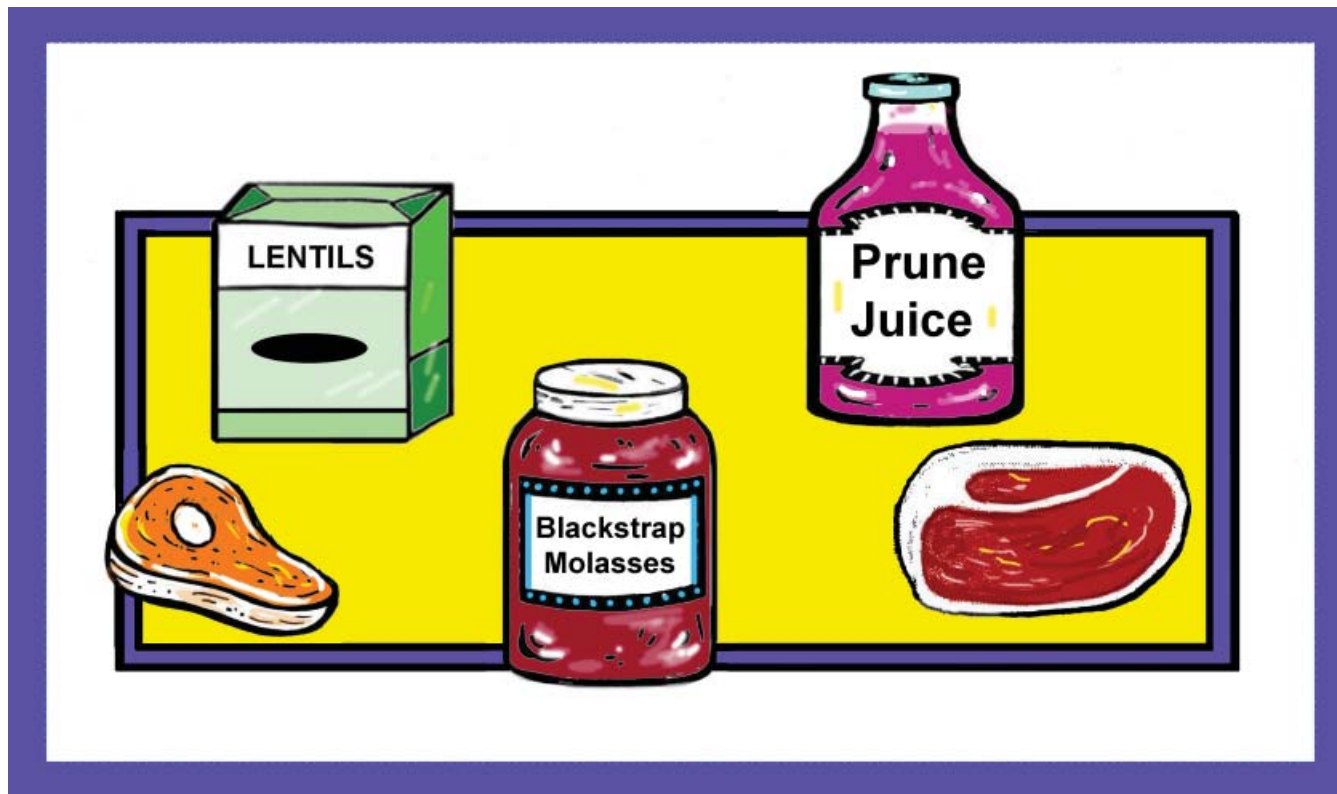


# IRON



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
**EXTENSION**  
FOOD STAMP NUTRITION EDUCATION  
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION  
EDUCATION PROGRAM



Iron

(teacher)

Share with participants:

***“It is important to have adequate iron in your diet.”***

- Everyone needs iron in the diet.
- One of its important jobs is to be used by red blood cells to carry oxygen in the body. Iron combines with proteins to make hemoglobin, which is the red substance of blood. Hemoglobin carries oxygen from the lungs to the muscles, the brain, and all other parts of the body. All cells in your body need oxygen to survive.
- If you don't get enough iron from your food, you may get iron-poor blood, also called anemia. When you have anemia you don't get enough oxygen to all your cells. This makes you very tired and run-down.

**Iron is important in your diet.**



Iron 3

Iron is important in your diet.



(teacher)

Share with participants:

***“Iron needs will depend on gender, age and if you are pregnant.”***

### ***“How Much Iron Do You Need?”***

	Females	Males
Infants and Children (4 - 10 years)	6 - 10	6 - 10
Teenagers (11 - 18 years)	15	12
Adults (19 - 50 years)	15	15
Older Adults (51 + years)	10	10
Pregnant	30 +	

### **How Much Iron Do You Need?**

Milligrams needed daily.

	Females	Males
Infants and Children (4 - 10 years)	6 - 10	6 - 10
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Iron 5

Iron 4

# How Much Iron Do You Need?

## Milligrams Needed Daily

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<b>Pregnant</b>	30 +	

(teacher)

Share with participants:

***“Iron is found in both animal and plant foods.”***

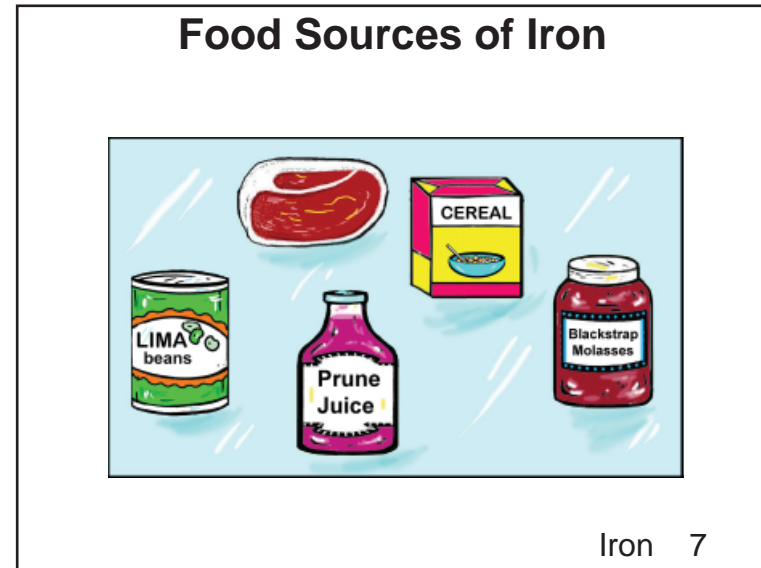
**Food sources of iron:**

**Animal sources:**

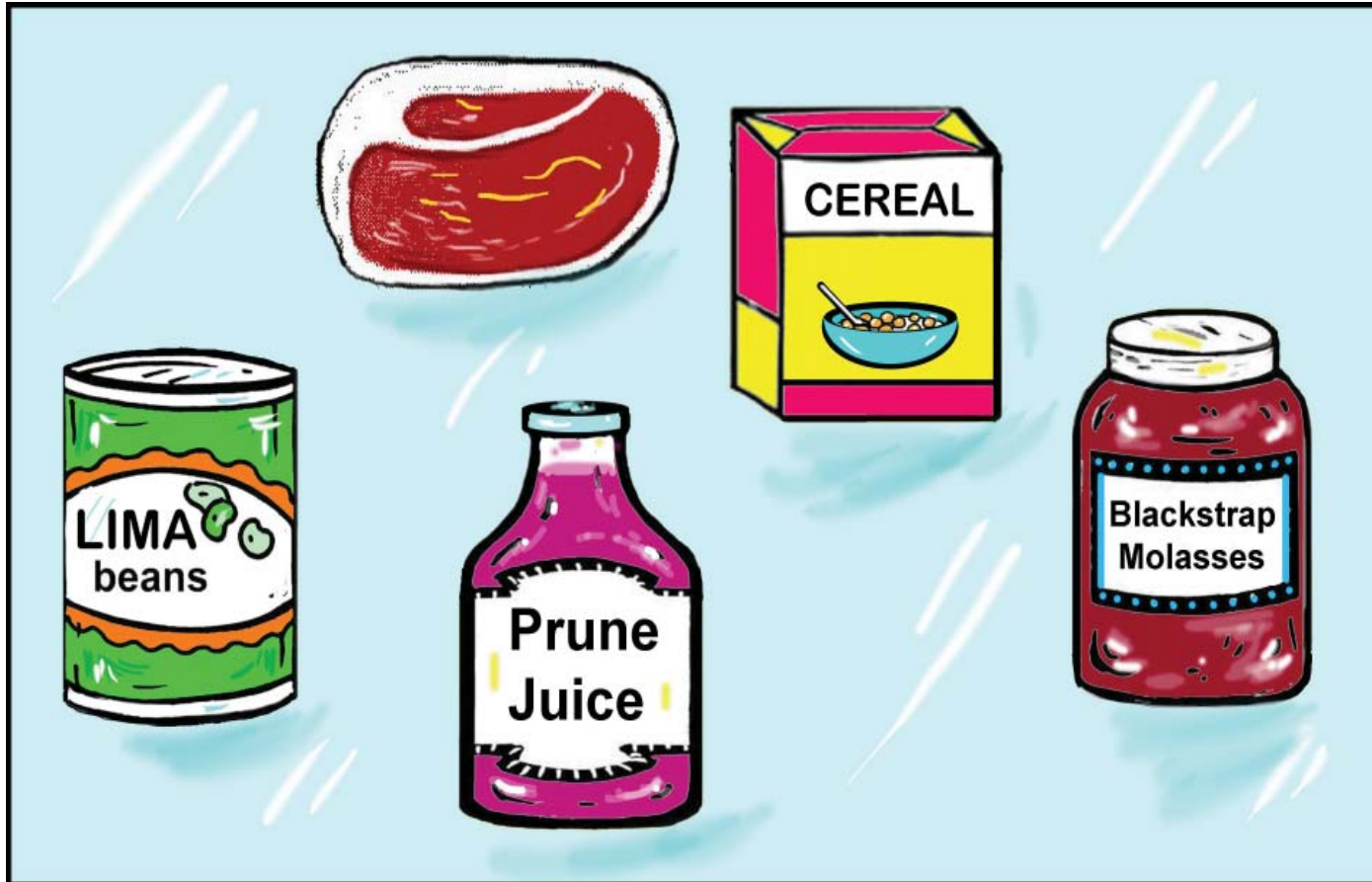
Meat, poultry, clams, oysters, sardines, etc.

**Plant sources:**

Iron-fortified cereals, blackstrap molasses, bran, prune juice, beans, and iron-enriched flour products (breads, pasta), tomatoes, etc.



# Food Sources of Iron



(teacher)

Share with participants:

***“Iron in animal foods is more easily absorbed by the body than iron from plant foods.”***

- Both animal and plant foods have iron.
- The iron in animal foods or meats is heme iron.
- The iron in plant foods is non-heme iron.

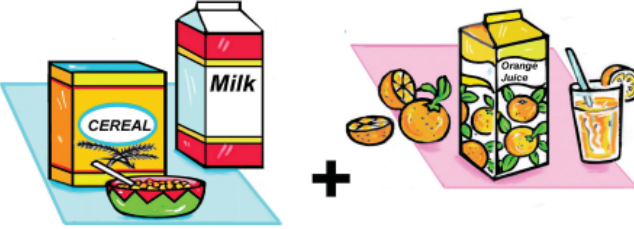
Remember the **MEAT FACTOR**

- Meat, poultry and fish contain a special quality called the meat factor which helps the body absorb more non-heme iron or iron from plant foods. For example, if you eat meat and vegetables together, you absorb more iron from the vegetables than if you eat vegetables alone.

Include **VITAMIN C** Sources

- Foods that contain Vitamin C such as fruits and vegetables help the body absorb more non-heme iron (iron from plant foods). For example, if you eat citrus fruits along with your cereal, you will absorb more iron from the cereal than if you eat the cereal alone.

**Vitamin C helps the body absorb iron from plant foods.**



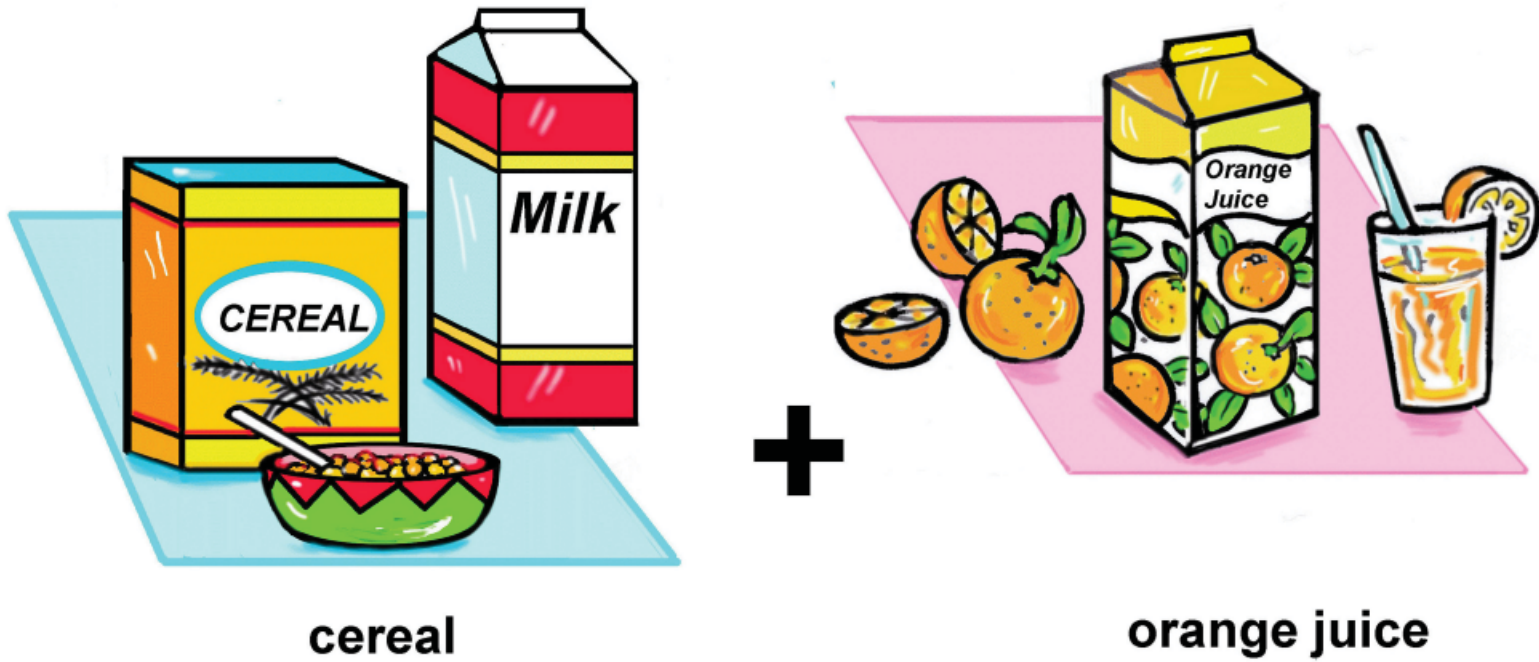
**Can you think of other combinations?**

Iron 9

Try to think of other combinations:

- chili with beans and tomato sauce
- peanut butter sandwich and orange juice
- iron-enriched pasta or rice and hamburger

# Vitamin C helps the body absorb iron from plant foods.



Can you think of other combinations?

(teacher)

Share with participants:

***“Some foods decrease the amount of iron being absorbed in the body.”***

Some foods decrease the body’s absorption of iron.

- Spinach, chocolate, wheat bran and legumes all contain substances that decrease the body’s ability to absorb non-heme iron.
- COFFEE and TEA inhibit non-heme iron absorption.
- Consume vitamin C or foods with heme-iron (meat, poultry and fish) with these foods and drinks to help your body absorb iron.

**To get more IRON from foods:**



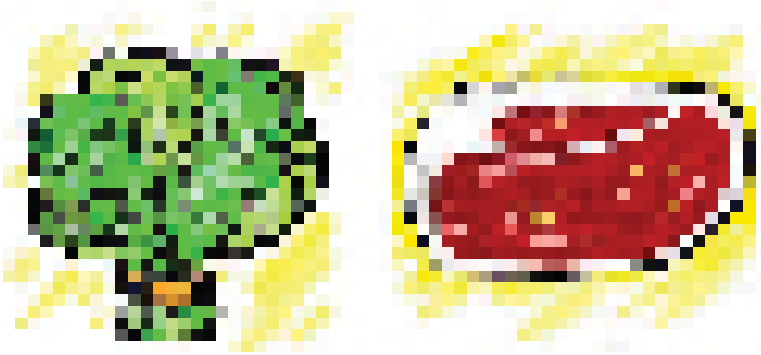
**Spinach + beef**



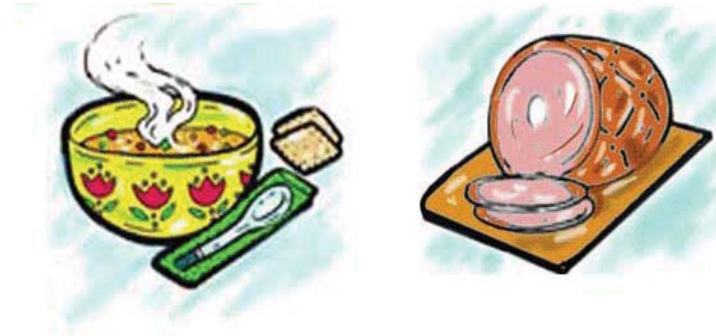
**Bean soup + ham**

Iron 11

# To get more IRON from foods:



**Spinach + beef**



**Bean soup + ham**