

## What is iron ?

Iron is a mineral needed by the body. It makes up a part of the blood called haemoglobin that carries oxygen around the body.

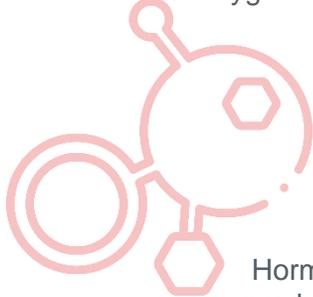
It is also important for:



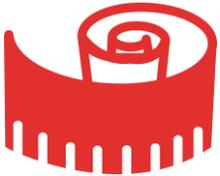
Immunity



Brain function

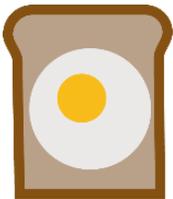


Hormone production

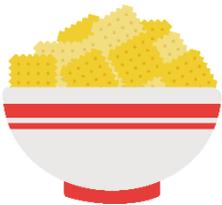


Growth

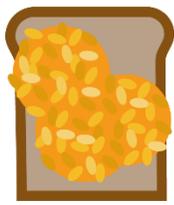
## What breakfast foods provide iron?



eggs on wholemeal toast



fortified breakfast cereals



Beans on wholemeal toast



**If you skip breakfast, you are more likely to be anaemic”**



## Why is breakfast important ?

Your breakfast provides you with iron. A bowl of fortified cereal could provide you with over half of your daily iron needs. On average in the UK, breakfast provides children and teenagers with over a third of their daily iron needs.

Every meal will help you to top up iron levels as well as helping to top up other vitamins and minerals too. A missed meal, is a missed opportunity to top up of your essential vitamins and minerals.

**Did you know that adding fruit to your cereal will help your body absorb more iron?**

## Test your knowledge with our mini quiz

1. You are more likely to have iron deficiency if you are vegetarian?
2. Iron deficiency is rare in the UK?
3. Blood is red due to the iron in it ?
4. An adult can have around 2 litres (5 pints) of blood in their body ?
5. The President of the US carries blood in the boot of his presidential car?
6. Anaemia (a lack of iron) can cause you to feel tired?

## Answers

1. **It can be true.** The iron from meat is better absorbed by your body than iron from vegetable sources. If you are vegetarian, it is important to make sure you have lots of iron rich foods such as beans, eggs, lentils, tofu, quorn, chickpeas ...
2. **False.** It is fairly common in this country. In fact, it is thought that around 3 girls per class of 30 may not have enough iron—a lack of iron particularly affects girls as they need more iron than boys.
3. **True.** Did you know that crabs have blue blood ? This is because of the amount of copper in their blood.
4. **False.** It is more like 3.5 to 5.5 litres (6-10 pints)!
5. **True.** He leaves nothing to chance and carries around a fridge with his type of blood as well as other medical supplies. Did you know there are 4 main blood groups?
6. **True.** This is one of the signs of iron deficiency. Other signs can include being out of breath when exercising, getting more illnesses such as colds or infections, having cold hands and feet or looking pale.

