

Hemoglobin Hints

These foods are good

sources of iron:

- red meat and liver
- oysters, scallops, shrimp and clams
- dark, leafy green vegetables
- raisins, dates and nuts
- whole grain breads and rice
- potatoes and beans
- watermelon

These foods help your body absorb iron:

- citrus fruits and drinks
- fresh fruits

Don't Worry...

The hemoglobin test tells us if you have enough hemoglobin in your blood to safely donate. If you test slightly below minimum levels, it means that you may have enough hemoglobin for yourself, but not enough to share.

You should concentrate on eating iron-rich foods. **Then try to donate again in a week.**

What is hemoglobin?

The most common reason donors are temporarily deferred from giving blood is because they have low hemoglobin.

The hemoglobin test, which is done through a finger stick, determines the amount of iron-containing pigment in your red blood cells.

Why are red blood cells important?

Blood is a living tissue composed of plasma, red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets. Red cells make up 38% or more of the volume of blood; plasma, a watery solution, makes up most of the remainder.

Red cells perform a vital function. Their job

is to carry oxygen throughout the body. Red cells pick up oxygen at the lungs as it is inhaled, then deliver it to all cells in the body. The red cells then carry carbon dioxide back to the lungs where it is exhaled.

Because you are giving up red cells when you make a blood donation, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the American Association of Blood Banks standards require that your hemoglobin be adequate - at least 12.5g/dl.

Why is iron important?

The body needs iron to help produce hemoglobin. Red cells contain hemoglobin, a protein and iron compound.

Hemoglobin is what gives blood its

red color and is the part of the blood that transports oxygen and carbon dioxide molecules.

What foods are rich in iron?

Green leafy vegetables are high in iron content, as are red meats and whole grains.

Foods poor in iron usually lack pigment. With a few exceptions, such as the potato and enriched white bread, it may help you

to remember that white foods are not good builders of red blood cells!

