Iron is an important mineral that is used in oxygen transport throughout the body — which is why fatigue is a common symptom of low iron.

There are 2 forms of dietary iron: heme and non-heme. Since non-heme iron isn’t absorbed as well, it’s important to mix non-heme iron foods with a source of vitamin C to increase your body’s ability to use it. Use these tips to be sure you are getting enough iron in your diet.

**Take-Away Tip:** Maximize Iron Absorption

**Chicken & Mango Stir-fry**

**Ingredients:**
- 2 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1 bunch green onions, cut on angle
- 1/2 cup of kale
- 1/2 cup of broccoli
- 1” piece of ginger
- 2 cloves of chopped garlic
- 1 red pepper, cut into strips
- 2 mangos, skinned and cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp. of sesame oil
- 1/4 cup of arrowroot flower
- Herbamere (or salt)
- Pepper
- 3 tbsp. of tamari
- 1 cup of water

**Directions:**
1) Cut chicken into bite size pieces and coat with arrowroot flower, herbamere and pepper
2) Pour sesame oil into pan or wok over medium heat. Add ginger, green onion and garlic. Sauté for a few minutes.
3) Add chicken. Add water as needed and stir in vegetables and tamari.
4) When vegetables are tender stir in mango and serve.

*Recipe from: Sandy Pomeroy – 'Goodness Me' Classes in Hamilton, Ontario*

**Tips to Get Enough Iron**

- Choose iron fortified cereals and grains
- Add cooked spinach to soups, pasta sauces and stir-frys
- Try pumpkin seeds or pepita seeds in trail-mix or salads
- Choose lean red meats to boost iron once a week
- Enjoy clams or oysters as a change of pace
- Check your label for dark chocolate, it may be a source of iron

**Fact:** Tannins are compounds found in tea that can decrease the absorption of iron. If you’re a tea drinker be sure to drink it between meals, rather than during, to maximize its absorption.

**Types of Iron**

**Heme Iron:**
Heme iron is found in meat, fish and poultry and is the easier form for our bodies to absorb.

**Non-heme Iron:**
Non-heme iron is found in non-animal products such as plant foods and fortified cereal. This form of iron is a harder for your body to absorb. To improve its absorption, non-heme iron can be paired with heme-iron food sources and can also be mixed with foods rich in vitamin C such as broccoli, peppers, kale, cantaloupe, strawberries, oranges and tomatoes.

**Heme-Iron Sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Iron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oysters</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.8 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef (lean)</td>
<td>2.5 ounces</td>
<td>2.4 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey (dark)</td>
<td>2.5 ounces</td>
<td>1.7 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Breast</td>
<td>2.5 ounces</td>
<td>0.9 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-Heme Iron Sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Iron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fortified Oatmeal</td>
<td>1 packet</td>
<td>11.0 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumpkin seeds</td>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
<td>8.6 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked Spinach</td>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
<td>3.2 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Beans</td>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
<td>1.8 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adult males and women over 50 require 8 mg of iron daily, whereas women aged 18-50 require 18 mg of iron per day. Iron requirements increase during pregnancy to 27 mg/day.**