

Are you in need of more iron?



*By nutritional therapist Sheila Garry,
graduate of CNM*

Research by the Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance found that 61% of Irish women aged 18- 50 years did not get enough iron in their diet. Women in this age group have higher requirements of iron because of menstrual losses.

Iron is vital for the transport and release of oxygen in our body tissues; without enough oxygen, all our cells become tired and we function less well.

For women and girls, having low levels of iron can be a primary cause of tiredness.

Meat is known to be a rich source of iron. However, with many women looking to cut back on red meat in particular, it is good to also be aware of non-meat sources. Here are some tips to increase your iron intake from plant sources:

Half a cup of cooked lentils provides half the Irish recommended daily intake of iron for women. Rinse some red lentils and add them to a home-made soup or curry.

Canned chickpeas are a convenient and rich source of iron. Use them as a base for a summer salad with tomatoes and peppers, add them to stews, pasta dishes and soups or enjoy them as the main ingredient in hummus.

Tannins in tea can impair absorption of iron from food. Have tea in between, rather than with, meals.

Green vegetables such as spinach, kale, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, rocket and herbs are not only rich in iron; they are great sources of vitamin C which is known to significantly increase the absorption of iron from foods.

► **CNM trains students for careers in natural therapies.**
Visit www.naturopathy.ie or call 01 2353084

