

## Identifying iron-rich food

As a general rule, foods poor in iron tend to have a noticeable lack of pigment, with the exception of potato and enriched white bread. Iron-rich foods include lean meats, eggs, whole grains, leafy green vegetables, and legumes, such as peas and beans. **So, look for colorful foods!**



## When can you give blood again?

You can give blood again when your hemoglobin level increases.

If you have any questions about your deferral for low hemoglobin level, please feel free to ask us today before you leave.

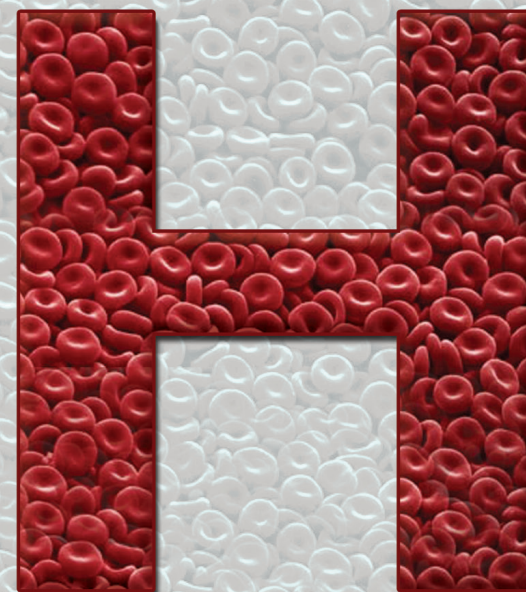


For More Information

Call 808-848-4770 | [www.BBH.org](http://www.BBH.org)

Toll-free 1-800-372-9966

## A Guide to Hemoglobin



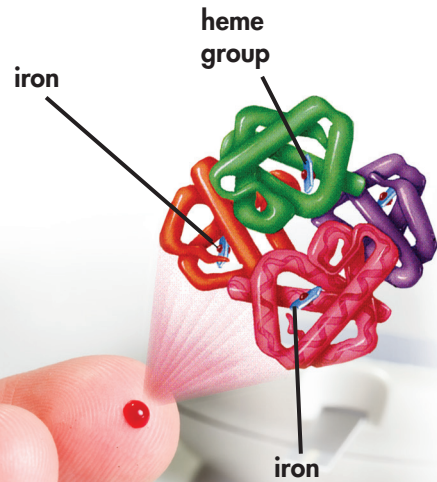
Understanding Hemoglobin  
THE RED COLOR



**Blood Bank of Hawaii**

## What is hemoglobin?

Your red blood cells contain hemoglobin, a molecule comprised of protein and iron, which carries oxygen to the body tissue and gives blood its red color. We use a single drop of your blood to determine the amount of hemoglobin in your red blood cells every time you come in to donate blood.



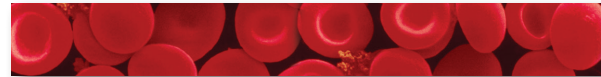
You probably know this best as the “finger stick” we do during your health check before you donate.

Giving a pint of blood requires starting at a high normal level so that your blood count will remain in the normal range after you have donated.



### Low hemoglobin doesn't mean you're sick or anemic.

In rare cases where hemoglobin count is abnormally low, donors are advised to consult their personal physician.



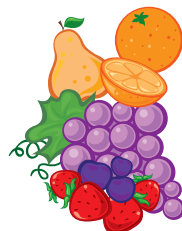
## Causes of low hemoglobin

The most frequent cause of low hemoglobin is an iron-poor diet maintained over long periods of time. You may also “lose” iron for many different reasons, such as gastrointestinal disease, heavy menstrual flow, and surgery. Other reasons include lack of sleep, stress and dieting.

### What can you do?

You can help build your hemoglobin level by eating a consistent diet of foods that contain iron.

#### Foods that help build iron:



#### Fruits

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| Apricots     | Oranges    |
| All berries  | Plums      |
| Dried fruits | Prunes     |
| Grapes       | Raisins    |
| Grapefruits  | Watermelon |



#### Meats

- |                     |        |
|---------------------|--------|
| Chicken             | Pork   |
| Lamb                | Turkey |
| Lean Beef           | Veal   |
| Liver (except fish) |        |



#### Seafood

- |           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| Crab      | Sardines |
| Oysters   | Shrimp   |
| Raw clams |          |



#### Vegetables

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Bean sprouts    | Kale         |
| Beets           | Lima beans   |
| Broccoli        | Peas         |
| Brussel sprouts | Potatoes     |
| Cabbage         | Tofu         |
| Green beans     | Tomato juice |



#### Whole Grain

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Bran             | Enriched pasta |
| Breads           | Soy bean flour |
| Brown rice       | Tortillas      |
| Enriched cereals | Wheat germ     |

## What if your hemoglobin is low?

If your hemoglobin value is less than our required level, you will be deferred (asked not to donate) until you can build it up. Keep in mind that you may be deferred even if your hemoglobin is in the normal range.

*Also, certain foods decrease your body's ability to absorb iron. They include:*

- Antacids
- Coffee
- Egg yolks
- Tea
- An excessive amount of whole grain products