

# IRON FORTIFICATION OF FOOD

**“Iron deficiency anemic” is not a nutritional deficiency disease. There are dozens of very diverse factors that can cause the conditions generally referred to as “iron deficiency anemia.” Chronic “iron deficiency anemia,” no matter what its origin may be, is a medical problem, not a nutritional problem.**

**Several toxicologists expressed their opinions to the Food and Nutrition Board that iron should be treated like all other metals that accumulate with age in the human body. We should minimize iron intake, except under conditions that require additional iron. Otherwise, iron can do serious damage to any and every tissue of the human body.**

**Iron is currently added to most all grain products, including many found in Natural Food stores. In the 1990s, the US Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, considered the controversy over iron fortification of food. A number of nutritionists desired to increase the amount of iron added to grain products because “iron-deficiency anemia” was still prevalent in spite of the iron fortification program that had been initiated in the early 1940s.**

**It was clear even then that the iron-fortification program had failed. The purpose of iron fortification was to eliminate or at least control “iron deficiency anemia” which was prevalent among pre-menopausal women. Unfortunately, the addition of iron to food was unsuccessful. “Iron deficiency anemia,” was still endemic among pre-menopausal women in 1990. Instead of acknowledging that the food iron-fortification program had failed, some members of the Food and Nutrition Board desired to increase the amount of iron added to food.**

**Iron excess may be a primary cause of coronary artery disease. There is direct evidence of iron deposits in heart tissue. Stored iron levels are a better predictor of heart disease than is blood cholesterol. Iron has been demonstrated to be carcinogenic in laboratory animals and is known to cause hepatocellular carcinoma in humans. High liver iron stores feed hepatitis B, and this may explain the high incidence of liver cancer found among people with hepatitis B.**

**Since “iron-deficiency anemia” among pre-menopausal women has not been controlled by the food fortification program, and since fatal illnesses due to iron overload are well-documented, it seems unreasonable to continue the iron fortification of food. However, the Food and Nutrition Board basically ignored information regarding iron’s toxicity, and all grains marketed in North America continue to be “fortified” with iron.**

**The most dangerous feature of iron is that it is attracted to, and deposits in, damaged tissue. The Food and Nutrition Board acknowledged an increased risk for hepatocellular carcinoma in individuals with hereditary hemochromatosis and had evidence linking iron excess to coronary artery disease. However, there is no mention of the involvement of iron in neuron degeneration caused by iron deposited in the brain. The information linking iron deposits in the brain to Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, and other neurological diseases is compelling. How could the people responsible for the welfare of our entire population have ignored this information?**

**Because most all grains continue to be fortified with varying amounts of iron, the Food and Nutrition Board didn’t offer any way for people to avoid these “highly fortified foods,” nor has there been any attempt to inform people that they may be harmed by these foods.**