

Blood Deficiency Food Recommendations:

- Blood nourishing foods include eggs, dark red and black beans, cherries, dates, beets, spinach, blueberries, collard greens, apricots, molasses, eggs, meat, and fermented soy products (miso, tempeh, tofu), bean sprouts, chlorella, spirulina, nettles, molasses, grapes, huckleberries, wheat grass, and whole grains
- For severe blood deficiency animal products or supplementation may be necessary: royal jelly, gelatin, carp soup, oysters, mussels, liver of beef, lamb, or chicken
- Good sources of **iron**: algae, seaweed, micro-algae such as spirulina, liver, red meat
- Good sources of **folic acid****: chlorella and spirulina, sprouts, leafy greens, & liver. Folic acid is easily lost during cooking, so only lightly steam sprouts and greens.
- Good sources of **B12**: liver, algae (such as chlorella, spirulina, & seaweed), yeasts (such as Brewer's yeast), and raw fermented foods (such as sauerkraut, kim chi, pickles, miso, tempeh, yogurt, sourdough bread, etc.)
- Good sources of **Vitamin C**: bell peppers, cabbage, sprouts, parsley, broccoli, and rose hip tea. Nearly all fresh fruits and vegetables contain Vitamin C when eaten within a couple days of picking.
- Good sources of Copper: apricot, swiss chard, spinach, collard greens, kale, squid, crab, lobster, oysters, shiitake mushrooms, brazil nuts, cashews, aduki & garbanzo beans

Blood Deficiency Tips and Tendencies:

- People with this pattern may have: pale complexion, lips, nail bed, & tongue. There may be spots in the field of vision, premature graying or thinning of hair, hair loss, dry hair & skin, trembling or numbness in the arms or hands. Disorders associated with blood deficiency include nervousness, anemia (although if you are blood deficient you are not necessarily anemic), low back pain, headache, menstrual pain, amenorrhea.
- 2 principles to follow to build up blood through nutrition:
 - Increase the absorptive energy of the digestive tract: build the Qi energy and reduce any dampness conditions (see Spleen Qi deficiency diet and Dampness diet).
 - Eat foods that boost blood and contain the necessary nutrients to build blood. **Nutrients most often needed to build blood include iron, folate, vitamin B12, copper, and Vitamin C.** I have seen anemic (blood deficient) patients who have iron levels off the chart in their hair analysis. They were actually low in the vitamins needed to absorb iron (copper was extremely low). After proper supplementation of folate and copper their iron levels went up.
- Blood deficiency is extremely responsive to dietary changes and usually occurs along with a Spleen Qi deficiency (the Spleen is the source of Blood, check out this diet too). It takes 120 days to fully renew the Blood, so dietary changes need to be maintained at least 4 months to have full effect.

**There is a widespread genetic mutation of MTHFR (methylene tetrahydrofolate reductase) which is an enzyme that activates folic acid by adding a methyl group (it is then folate and it can transfer methyl groups to other parts of the body, necessary for energy production & detoxification). For those with a mutation of MTHFR methylation doesn't happen and the folic acid backs up the liver (where the methylation occurs in those without the mutation) leading to a variety of health complaints (fatigue, irritability, anxious, brain fog, and increased risk of cancer). Because of this, folic acid supplements and fortified foods are damaging to those with this mutation. Stress also adversely affects methylation of folic acid, which leads to improper methylation throughout the body. This is a complex mutation which is effectively treated through diet and supplementation.