



Magnetic Cereal

Attract iron-fortified cereal with a magnet!

Activity Guide

Try This!

SAFETY: Magnets can pinch! Take care when using strong magnets.

Total Cereal

1. Fill a cereal bowl with water.
2. Float a few flakes of cereal on the water.
3. Use the magnet to pull a cereal flake across the water.
Why do you think the cereal is attracted to the magnet?

Farina Cereal

1. Pour the cereal into a mixing bowl.
2. Put the magnet inside a sandwich bag.
3. Hold one end of the baggie-wrapped magnet, and use it to stir the cereal. Stir for a minute or two.
4. Remove the baggie-wrapped magnet, and hold it over the sheet of cardstock.
5. Take the magnet out of the bag, and shake the bag gently over the cardstock.
6. Tiny gray particles should fall on the paper.
7. Carefully lift the cardstock. Put the magnet underneath it and move it around under the particles. Are the particles attracted to the magnet?



What's Going On?

Believe it or not, many breakfast cereals contain pure iron—basically the same thing that is used to make the nails you might use to build a house!

Iron is an essential nutritional element. It's added to cereals to make them more nutritious. Hydrochloric acid and other chemicals in your digestive tract change the tiny particles of iron in the cereal into a form that your body can absorb.

Red blood cells contain a compound called hemoglobin that carries oxygen. (Hemoglobin is what makes blood red.) Hemoglobin molecules are made up of iron and other elements. Lack of iron can cause fatigue, reduced resistance to sickness and disease, and an increased heart and respiratory rate.

Learning Objectives

- Some cereals are fortified with iron to make them more nutritious.
- Our bodies need iron (a common metal) so that hemoglobin in our red blood cells can carry oxygen.

Materials

- Total® or other flake breakfast cereal with a high iron content
- Farina® wheat cereal or other finely-milled, iron-fortified breakfast cereal
- Magnet
- Fold-top sandwich bag
- Cereal bowl
- Mixing bowl
- Water
- Sheet of white cardstock

Credits

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