

A vibrant assortment of fresh fruits and vegetables including tomatoes, grapes, carrots, strawberries, and apples. The produce is arranged in a dense, overlapping composition, showcasing a variety of colors and textures. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark grey rectangular area in the lower half of the image.

Your Food And Your Health

PREVENTING ANAEMIA

The research for this report was conducted as a MPhil project based on a request for such research by Neighbourhood Old Age Homes (NOAH).

This booklet presents the findings of the project for its beneficiaries.

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UCT KNOWLEDGE CO-OP

The UCT Knowledge Co-op facilitated this collaborative project.

See <http://www.knowledgco-op.uct.ac.za> or

Contact us at barbara.schmid@uct.ac.za / 021 – 650 4415



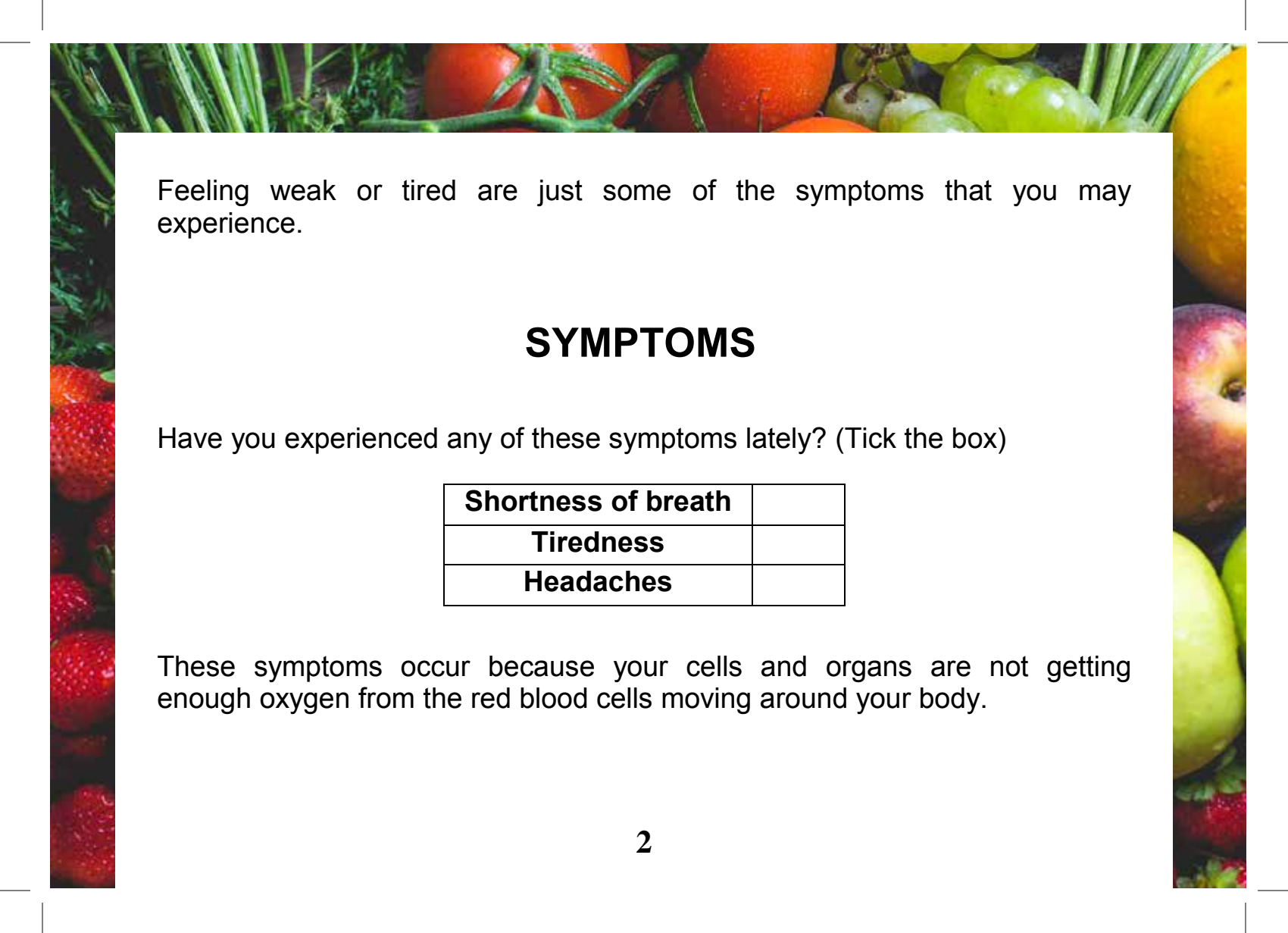
ANAEMIA

Anaemia is a common condition that develops when your body is not producing enough red blood cells.

Haemoglobin gives our blood its red colour and has a very important job of transporting oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body.

This cannot be done if your body is not getting enough of the right nutrients from its diet.

Haemoglobin needs iron to function. And to get your body back to functioning healthy, it is important to get enough iron in your body.



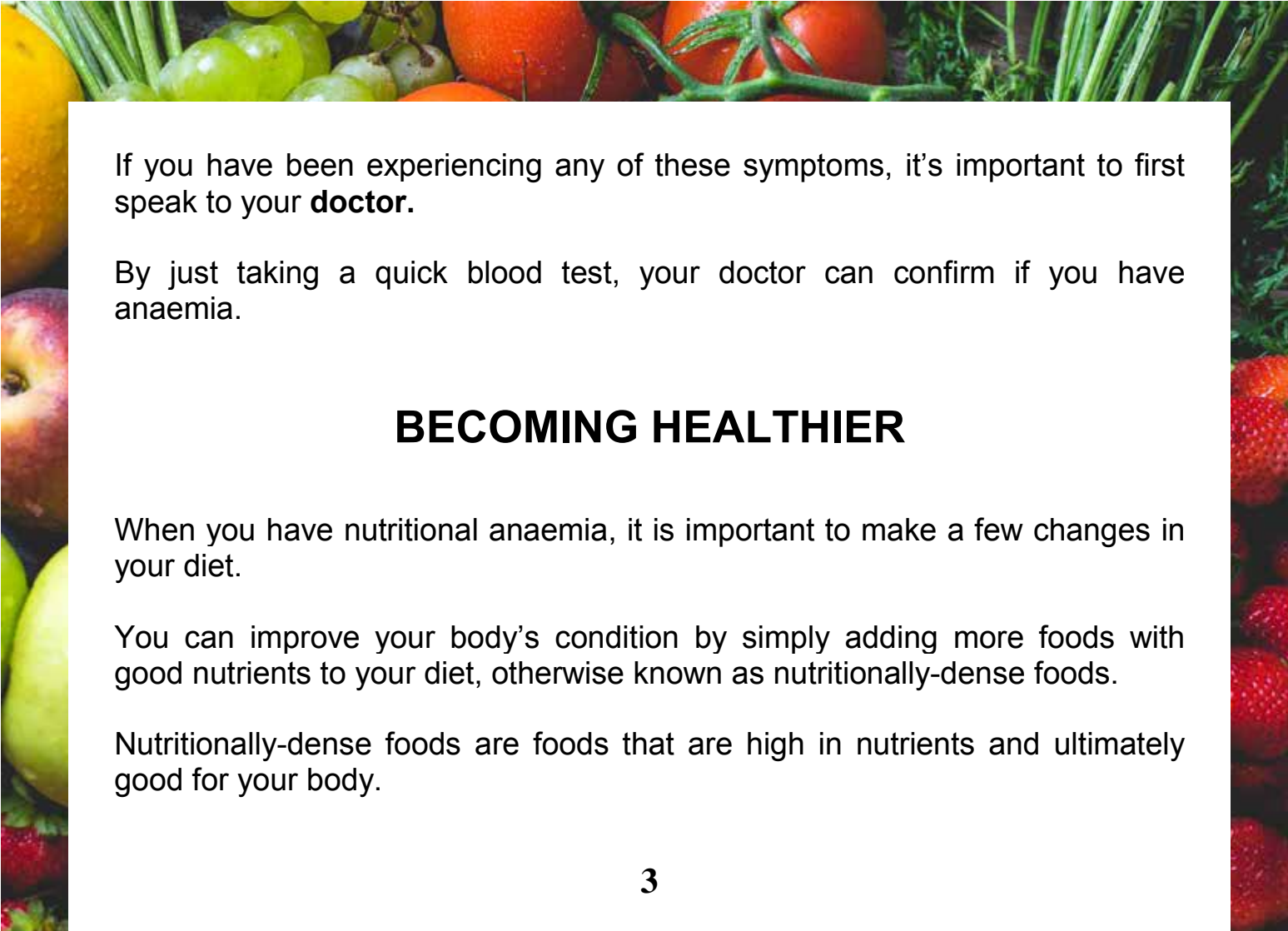
Feeling weak or tired are just some of the symptoms that you may experience.

SYMPTOMS

Have you experienced any of these symptoms lately? (Tick the box)

Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tiredness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Headaches	<input type="checkbox"/>

These symptoms occur because your cells and organs are not getting enough oxygen from the red blood cells moving around your body.



If you have been experiencing any of these symptoms, it's important to first speak to your **doctor**.

By just taking a quick blood test, your doctor can confirm if you have anaemia.

BECOMING HEALTHIER

When you have nutritional anaemia, it is important to make a few changes in your diet.

You can improve your body's condition by simply adding more foods with good nutrients to your diet, otherwise known as nutritionally-dense foods.

Nutritionally-dense foods are foods that are high in nutrients and ultimately good for your body.

Foods that are high in iron often include nutrients such as vitamin B-12, folate and vitamin C. These nutrients are important help to combat aneamia.

The table below shows the foods that are high in these nutrients:

IRON 
FOLATE 
VITAMIN B12 





VITAMIN C



IRON

Iron is an important part of the haemoglobin protein because it helps the haemoglobin to transport oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body.







You can find iron in two types of food sources: animal products and plant-based foods. Animal products are a better source of iron and are found in:

Chicken 	Chicken or beef livers 
Red Meat 	Fish or Tinned fish 

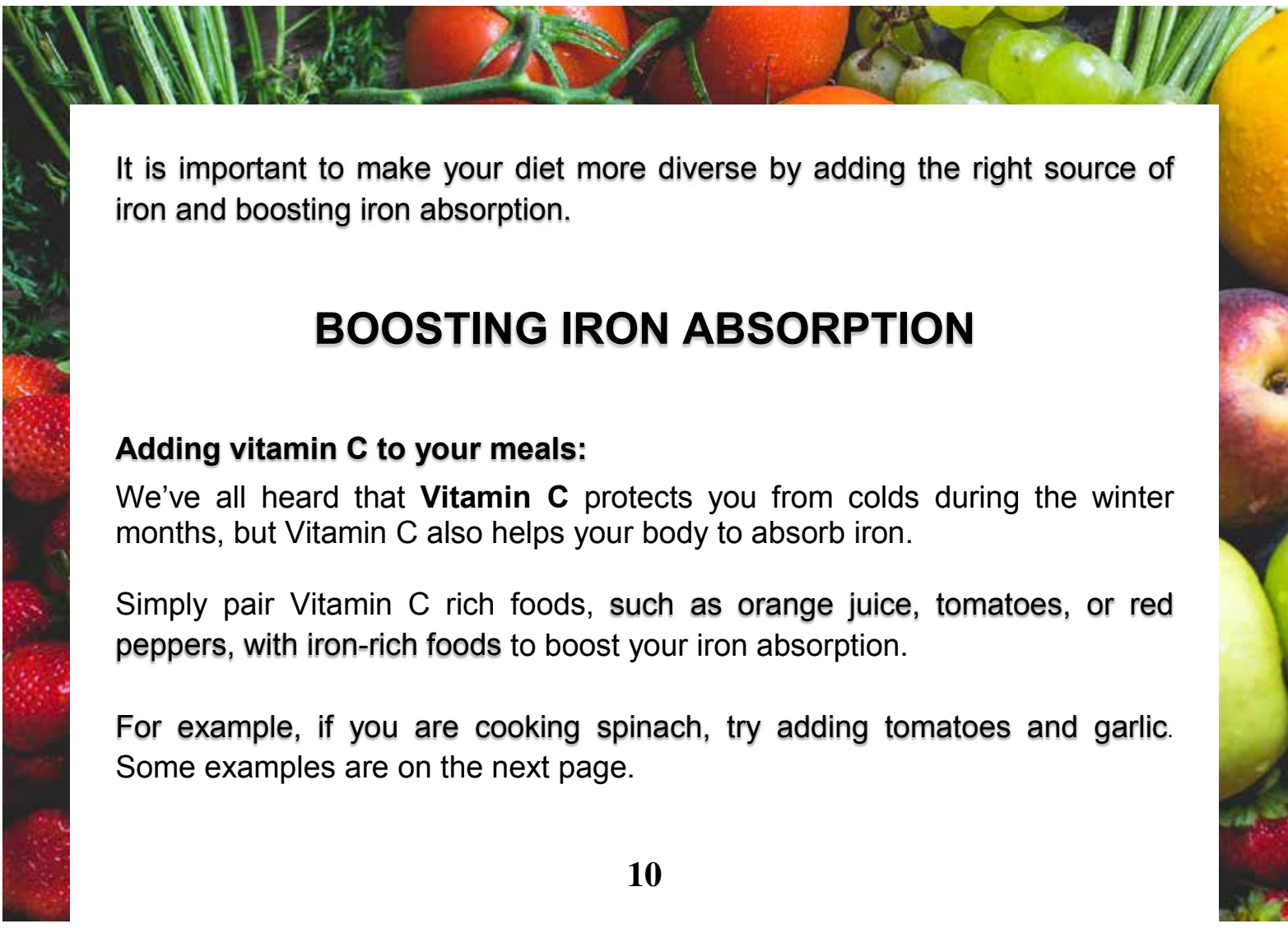
Plant-based lesser foods are a source of Iron but still good.

Leafy Greens 	Spinach 
Baby Spinach 	Broccoli 
Kale 	Baked Beans 

More plant-based foods

Kidney Beans 	Samp and Beans 
Peas 	Raisins 
Nuts and Seeds 	Dried Fruit 





It is important to make your diet more diverse by adding the right source of iron and boosting iron absorption.

BOOSTING IRON ABSORPTION

Adding vitamin C to your meals:

We've all heard that **Vitamin C** protects you from colds during the winter months, but Vitamin C also helps your body to absorb iron.

Simply pair Vitamin C rich foods, such as orange juice, tomatoes, or red peppers, with iron-rich foods to boost your iron absorption.

For example, if you are cooking spinach, try adding tomatoes and garlic. Some examples are on the next page.

Beef or chicken livers



Oranges



Spinach



Fruit Juice



Eggs



Bread



Baked beans



Cereal



VITAMIN C

Naartjies



Potatoes



Broccoli



Oranges



Peppers



Berries



Tomatoe



Cauliflower



Cabbage



Don't forget other vitamins as well. Next, we have examples of these as well.



VITAMIN B12

Vitamin B12 is important to produce red healthy red blood cells.

You can find vitamin B12 in a range of grains, meats and dairy products.

Sometimes Vitamin B12 is added to foods such as cereals and bread and this is known as fortified B12.

Simply check the labels of a product to see whether it contains fortified B12 and if so try to add to your diet.

B12 GRAINS

Maize Meal



Mabele Porridge



Oats



Cereals



Brown Bread



Rice



B12 ANIMAL MEAT

Red Meat



Poultry



Liver



Fish



B12 DAIRY

Eggs



Yogurt



Milk





FOLATE

Folate or folic acid is a form of vitamin B that is also needed to maintain healthy red blood cells.

You can find this vitamin in many shop-bought foods. They come in grains such as bread, flour, pastas and rice. As well as cereals, meat, eggs and some fruit and vegetables. Some examples can be found on the next page.



BEST DRINKS



Water

Drinking water throughout the day keeps you hydrated and helps to move the nutrients around your body. It also helps your body to digest your food properly.



Orange Juice

Helps with absorption of iron.

You can do this by drinking small amounts of water throughout the day.



Rooibos tea

Does not stop absorption of iron.

- *Do not drink tea and coffee with meals as this stops absorption of iron. Rather drink these between meals.*

SUPERMARKETS AND VENDORS

All these foods, fruits and vegetables can be found at your nearest supermarket, shop or vendor.



FOODS IN MODERATION

Processed foods should be eaten in moderation. Processed food such as junk food are low in nutrients and are not healthy to have on a regular basis.

Junk food



Chocolate



Sugar



Alcohol





START SMALL

Changing your diet is never easy, that is why it is advisable to start small. Look in your cupboard and fridge and see what healthier options are available to you.

You can start by adding vegetables that are easier to find and later add more different kinds of vegetables to your meal when you are able to.

For example, add more spinach to your meals. Spinach does not cost a lot of money and is extremely healthy as it is full of iron.

Adding tomatoes to your spinach will help your body to absorb the iron and bring more variety into your meal.

Canned fish such as pilchards and tuna are usually affordable and are a good source of protein.



CONCLUSION

Getting older means that your body changes and may need different nutrients, such as iron, vitamin B12 and Vitamin C.

By adding more iron and nutrient-dense foods into your diet, you can stay healthy and keep your energy levels high.

You can start with the foods that are available to you and improve your diet. A healthier lifestyle comes with many benefits.

Everyone deserves to live their lives to its fullest, including you.

Take time to take care of your body and have a healthier lifestyle.





DISCLAIMER

All material in the booklet is provided for your information only and may not be construed as medical advice or instruction. No action or inaction should be taken based solely on the contents of this information; instead, readers should consult appropriate health professionals on any matter relating to their health and well-being.

