MUNCHABLE METAL

Wanna bet there are iron filings in your breakfast cereals?

THE SETUP
Iron is good enough to eat. In fact, you do eat it. Breakfast cereal manufacturers often add bits of iron to their products. The pure iron is ground up so fine that you don’t notice it in the cereal, but a magnet can remove it.

Empty a packet of iron-enriched instant Cream of Wheat into a plastic bag.

Make sure that it provides one hundred percent of the daily requirement.

Crush the cereal and add water. Place a clean magnet in the bag. Shake well for a few minutes. As you remove the magnet, try to touch as little of the magnetic surface as possible. If you look closely, you'll see tiny iron filings clinging to the magnet. Carefully wipe the particles onto a sheet of white paper. To see them well, put the magnet under the paper and move it around to make the filings “dance.” You will collect only a tiny amount, but you don’t need much to provide your body’s total daily requirement.

INSIDER INFORMATION
Who would have thought you could eat pure iron, the stuff people pump in the gym? Hemoglobin, the red protein in the blood that carries oxygen, must have iron to do its job. Since the pure metal can be used as easily as iron compounds, the government permits very fine iron filings to be added to food. The words “iron fortified” on the package simply mean that ground-up iron has been added to the cereal.

We’ve heard that you can remove iron embedded in some flaked cereals such as Total. Crush the flakes and add water. Then go fishing with your magnet.