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A study by Baltimore researchers supports Popeye's belief that he was strong to the finish because of the iron in his spinach. Dr. Michael Miller, director of preventive cardiology at the University of Maryland, tested a theory put forward by Finnish researchers that high levels of iron stored in the body's tissues increase the risk of heart disease. Using autopsy records from Johns Hopkins Hospital dating back to 1889, he and a pathologist there examined whether people who had died of a genetic abnormality that causes dangerously high iron levels also had evidence of heart disease. Miller found the opposite to be true. Among the 41 people who had died of iron-overload diseases, only 12 percent had been described at their autopsy as having advanced or severe coronary artery disease, compared with 38 percent of the 82 people who had died of other causes, he reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association

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