



## Dietary Fiber

Fiber is the substance in plant food that we do not digest. The two main types of fiber are soluble and insoluble fiber. Both types of fiber are important to our health.

**Soluble fibers** are commonly found in fruits (especially pear, apple and citrus), oats, barley and legumes. These water-soluble fibers form gels that provide beneficial effects including:

- Delayed stomach emptying which contributes to early fullness and decreased appetite.
- The delayed stomach emptying slows the absorption of carbohydrates, thus reducing after-meal blood sugar increases.
- Decreased cholesterol and triglycerides.

**Insoluble fibers** are commonly found in wheat bran, corn bran, whole grain breads and cereals, as well as vegetables. Insoluble fiber has the effect of preventing constipation. Fiber functions like a sponge by attracting water into the digestive tract, softening stools and preventing constipation.

### Tips to Increase Fiber:

- Include raw fruits and vegetables in your diet. Increase vegetable consumption to at least 3 servings per day. Increase fruit consumption to at least 2 servings per day.
- Snack on fresh fruits and vegetables in place of sugary or refined foods
- Increase whole grain consumption to at least 4 servings per day. Include oats, brown rice, bran, quinoa, barley and whole wheat. Choose whole grains; avoid white flour products.
- Substitute whole grain flour for white flour in recipes.
- Add oat bran, wheat germ or rice bran to hot cereal or yogurt
- Add bran cereal or oatmeal to meat loaf, meatballs or hamburgers.
- Snack on unbuttered popcorn in place of potato chips, corn chips or pretzels
- Eat legumes daily. Replace creamy dips and spreads with bean dips or spreads such as hummus, black bean dip or refried beans.
- Remember animal products do not contain fiber.

It is recommended that we consume adequate fiber from a variety of food sources. Some good sources of fiber are beans, whole grains, vegetables and fruits. Refined foods tend to have less fiber due to processing.



Your goal is 30 grams of Total Fiber per day

<b>Food Sources of Fiber</b>				
<b>Food</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>	<b>Total Fiber (grams)</b>	<b>Soluble fiber (grams)</b>	<b>Insoluble fiber (grams)</b>
<b>FRUIT</b>				
Apple, with skin	1 medium	3.0	1.0	2.0
Banana	1 medium	2.0	0.6	1.4
Pear, with skin	1 medium	4.5	0.5	4.0
Orange	1 medium	2.0	1.3	0.7
Prunes	¼ cup	3.0	1.5	1.5
Strawberries	½ cup	1.0	0	1.0
<b>VEGETABLES</b>				
Carrots	1 large	2.9	1.3	1.6
Broccoli	½ cup	2.7	1.3	1.4
Brussel sprouts, cooked	½ cup	4.5	3.0	1.5
Corn	½ cup	1.5	0	1.5
Potato, baked with skin	1 medium	4.0	1.0	3.0
Spinach	½ cup	2.0	0.5	1.5
<b>BEANS, LEGUMES, NUTS and SEEDS</b>				
Black beans, cooked	½ cup	5.5	2.0	3.5
Garbanzo beans, cooked	½ cup	6.0	1.0	5.0
Green peas, cooked	2/3 cup	3.9	0.6	3.3
Kidney beans, cooked	½ cup	6.5	1.6	4.9
Lentils, cooked	2/3 cup	4.5	0.6	3.9
Lima beans, cooked	½ cup	6.5	3.5	3.0
Pinto beans, cooked	½ cup	5.9	1.2	4.7
Peanut butter, chunky	2 tbsp	1.5	0	1.5
Psyllium seeds, ground	1 tbsp	6.0	5.0	1.0
<b>WHOLE GRAINS</b>				
Barley, cooked	½ cup	4.0	1.0	3.0
Bran flake cereal	¾ cup	5.5	0.5	5.0
Brown rice, cooked	½ cup	1.5	0	1.5
English muffin, whole wheat	1	4.0	1.0	3.0
Rolled oats, cooked	¾ cup	3.0	1.3	1.7
Whole-wheat bread	1 slice	2.5	0.5	2.0

It is suggested to gradually increase fiber intake and drink plenty of water (at least 8 glasses per day) to avoid discomfort and gas that can occur with a sudden increase in fiber.