

4/19 *Creating Health & Nutrition
Fact Sheets*

Nutrition Information

Fiber is an important part of our daily diet. Plant foods like fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, seeds, dried beans, split peas, and lentils are our major sources.

Fiber is the part of plants the body cannot digest easily. Even though we don't digest it, fiber is important for good health.

We need fiber for bowel health, and a high-fiber diet may lower the risks for certain cancers,

heart disease, and even obesity.

Tip

The insoluble fiber in grains is especially good for keeping your bowel movements regular. Choose a high-fiber cereal to start the day.

Dietary fiber helps control blood glucose levels in persons with diabetes. It's more than just something to chew on.

Fiber: More Than Something to Chew On!

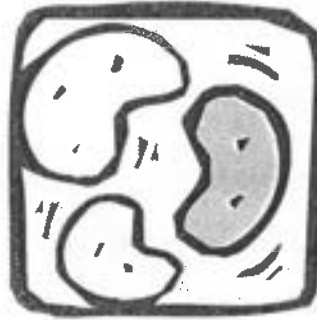
Shopping Tips

Adding Fiber to Your Diet

The best way to get more fiber in your diet is to start replacing low-fiber carbohydrates and other foods with foods that are higher in fiber. You can begin by making some simple changes when grocery shopping. Check the Nutrition Facts label.

A food that is a good source of fiber will have a daily value of 10 to 20 percent or more for fiber in a one-ounce serving. Here are a few examples of replacements:

- Substitute whole grain pasta for that made with white flour.
- Substitute brown rice for white.
- Eat beans a few times a week in place of your usual choice of chicken or beef choices.
- Eat enough fruits and vegetables. The



current daily recommendation is about 4½ cups, which is about 1½ cups or half a plate at each meal.

- Choose whole grain cereal in place of bagels and bakery treats for breakfast.

- Top your salad with toasted nuts instead of croutons.
- Eat three servings of whole grains each day and include a variety such as oats, whole wheat, barley, and brown rice.

Just remember, easy does it. If your fiber intake has been low, you should add dietary fiber *gradually* to avoid discomfort. This allows the natural bacteria in your digestive system to adjust to the change. To balance the fiber, also increase the amount of fluids you're drinking. You may want to drink more water, juice, or milk. Take your time so that your body can get used to the new eating pattern.

Tips Affecting Different Age Groups

How Much Fiber Do You Need?

Ages 1-6	Ages 8-12	Ages 13+, females	Ages 13+, males
16-20 grams	22-25 grams	25 grams	35-38 grams

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