

... FOR THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

FIBER FOR WEIGHT LOSS & HEALTH

## FIBER

Fiber is a substance in plants. Dietary fiber is the kind you eat and can be found in fruits, vegetables and grains. It is the part of the plant that your body cannot digest, yet it is an important part of a healthy diet. It adds bulk to your diet and makes you feel full faster, helping you control weight. Fiber helps digestion and helps prevent constipation.



## SOLUBLE & INSOLUBLE

Fiber is commonly classified into two categories: those that do not dissolve in water (insoluble fiber) and those that do (soluble fiber).

**Soluble fiber.** This type of fiber dissolves in water to form a gel-like material. It can help lower blood cholesterol and glucose levels. Soluble fiber is found in oats, peas, beans, apples, citrus fruits, carrots, barley and psyllium.

**Insoluble fiber.** This type of fiber promotes the movement of material through your digestive system and increases stool bulk, so it can be of benefit to those who struggle with constipation or irregular stools. Whole-wheat flour, wheat bran, nuts and many vegetables are good sources of insoluble fiber.

## HOW MUCH FIBER DO YOU NEED?

The National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine, gives the following daily recommendations for adults:

	Age 50 & Younger	Age 51 & Older
<b>MEN</b>	<b>38 grams</b>	<b>30 grams</b>
<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>25 grams</b>	<b>21 grams</b>

## BENEFITS OF A HIGH FIBER DIET

A high-fiber diet has many benefits, which include:

- ✓ **Normalizes bowel movements.** Dietary fiber increases the weight and size of your stool and softens it. A bulky stool is easier to pass, decreasing your chance of constipation. If you have loose, watery stools, fiber may also help to solidify the stool because it absorbs water and adds bulk to stool. For some, fiber may provide relief from irritable bowel syndrome.
- ✓ **Helps maintain bowel integrity and health.** A high-fiber diet may lower your risk of developing hemorrhoids, and small pouches in your colon (diverticular disease). Some fiber is fermented in the colon. Researchers are looking at how this may play a role in preventing diseases of the colon.
- ✓ **Lowers blood cholesterol levels.** Soluble fiber found in beans, oats, flaxseed and oat bran may help lower total blood cholesterol levels by lowering low-density lipoprotein, or "bad," cholesterol levels. Epidemiologic studies have shown that increased fiber in the diet can reduce blood pressure and inflammation, which is also protective to heart health.
- ✓ **Helps control blood sugar levels.** Fiber, particularly soluble fiber, can slow the absorption of sugar, which for people with diabetes can help improve blood sugar levels. A diet that includes insoluble fiber has been associated with a reduced risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- ✓ **Uncertain effect on colorectal cancer.** Evidence that dietary fiber reduces colorectal cancer is mixed — some studies show benefit, some show nothing and some suggest increased risk. If you are concerned about preventing colorectal cancer, adopt or continue with a colon cancer screening regimen.



## HOW DIETARY FIBER HELPS WEIGHT LOSS

Studies show that most people eat about the same weight of food each day. If you choose high-fiber, water-rich foods -- such as broth-based vegetable soups, salads, fruits, and vegetables -- instead of foods without fiber and water, you can eat the same weight of food but feel full on fewer calories.

A 2009 study in the journal *Appetite* compared the satiety or fullness factor of apples, applesauce, and apple juice with added fiber before lunch. People who ate an apple before lunch ate 15% fewer calories than those who ate the applesauce or drank apple juice. This suggests that the fiber in the whole apple was more filling even when compared to the juice that had added fiber.

Beyond the fiber content, crunching and chewing a whole piece of fruit stimulates your senses and takes longer to eat. So psychologically, it may also be more satisfying than beverages or soft foods. Chewing also promotes saliva and the production of stomach juices that help fill the stomach.



## TIPS FOR FITTING IN FIBER

- **Jump-start your day.** For breakfast choose a high-fiber breakfast cereal — 5 or more grams of fiber a serving. Opt for cereals with “bran” or “fiber” in the name. Or add a few tablespoons of unprocessed wheat bran to your favorite cereal.
- **Switch to whole grains.** Look for breads that list whole wheat, whole-wheat flour or another whole grain as the first ingredient on the label. Look for a brand with at least 2 grams of dietary fiber a serving. Experiment with brown rice, wild rice, barley, whole-wheat pasta and bulgur.
- **Bulk up your baked goods.** Substitute whole-grain flour for half or all of the white flour when baking. Whole-grain flour is heavier than white flour. In yeast breads, use a bit more yeast or let the dough rise longer. When using baking powder, increase it by 1 teaspoon for every 3 cups of whole-grain flour. Try adding crushed bran cereal or unprocessed wheat bran to muffins, cakes and cookies.
- **Mix it up.** Add pre-cut fresh or frozen vegetables to soups and sauces. For example, mix chopped frozen broccoli into prepared spaghetti sauce or toss fresh baby carrots into stews.
- **Eat fruit at every meal.** Apples, bananas, oranges, pears and berries are good sources of fiber.
- **Get a leg up with legumes.** Eat more beans, peas and lentils. Add kidney beans to canned soup or a green salad. Or make nachos with refried black beans, lots of fresh veggies, whole-wheat tortilla chips and salsa.



### RESOURCES

[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

[www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)

[www.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.nlm.nih.gov)

For More Information visit  
[www.WellnessCoachesUSA.com](http://www.WellnessCoachesUSA.com)