

Eating enough fiber is one of the best...and easiest...things you can do for your health...A diet that is high in fiber:

1. Aids digestion and helps prevent constipation.
2. Helps you maintain a healthy weight. High fiber foods tend to be lower in fat. They also fill you up more.
3. Helps lower blood cholesterol.
4. Helps keep blood sugar within normal range.
5. Can prevent or reduce the symptoms of bowel disease and decrease the risk of colon cancer.

How do I add Fiber to my diet?

Most people need to eat about twice as much fiber as they do. But adding fiber too quickly can cause gas, bloating, or diarrhea. To prevent this:

- Add high-fiber foods to your diet slowly over several weeks.
- Increase the amount of water you drink as you increase the fiber you eat. Drink at least one glass of water with each meal and a total of 8 glasses a day.

Where can I find Fiber?

A healthy diet includes 20-35 grams of fiber a day. This may sound like a lot, but you can meet the goal by eating a variety of foods each day. These foods are the best sources of fiber:

- Whole grain bread and cereals
- Fresh whole fruits and dried fruits
- Raw or lightly steamed vegetables
- Canned or dried beans, peas, or lentils
- Nuts and seeds

Tips for adding Fiber to your meals.

- Add frozen vegetables to a can of soup or put canned beans or lentils on a salad.
- Replace at least half of the meat in chili, stews and casseroles with canned or cooked beans.
- Include a salad with lunch or dinner. Choose leafy, dark green lettuce or fresh spinach.

- Add fresh, cut up vegetables to lunches, or eat them as snacks.
- Use brown or wild rice in place of white rice. Add beans or lentils for more fiber.
- Cut up whole fruits and add it to cereal at breakfast. Or top frozen yogurt with fruit for dessert or snack.
- Eat smooth-skinned fruits, such as pears, apples, nectarines, with the skin on.
- Choose oatmeal or high fiber cold cereals, such as shredded wheat, corn flakes, or all-bran cereal. Add 1 tablespoon of oat bran or wheat germ.
- For snacks, try air popped, low fat whole wheat or rye crackers, fresh or dried fruit, or a small handful of nuts. Or you might try cereal for a snack.

Fruits	Apple with skin, pear with skin, banana, orange, dried figs, prunes, strawberries, prunes.
Vegetables	Asparagus, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, carrots, celery, spinach, acorn squash, baked potato w/skin, sweet potato with skin, corn, green beans, lima beans.
Breads/Cereals	Bagel, corn tortilla, rye crackers, whole wheat bread, rye bread, pumpernickel bread, bran cereals, oatmeal, puffed wheat, shredded wheat, wheat germ, oat bran.
Nuts/Seeds	Almonds, dry roasted, peanuts, peanut butter, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, walnuts.