



Fabulous Fiber

Most people know that fiber is an important part of a nutritious diet.

However, many are confused as to what fiber really is and how it helps us. Fiber is a complex carbohydrate found in plants that cannot be broken down by the stomach or intestines. It acts as a broom to help sweep things through the body and prevents absorption of excess fats and cholesterol.

Fiber can be broken down into two general categories:

SOLUBLE FIBER (referred to as functional fiber)

Soluble fiber dissolves in water and forms a gel-type material to slow stomach emptying. This helps you to feel full longer, controls weight and stabilizes blood sugar. Soluble fiber also has the ability to bind with cholesterol in the gut before it is absorbed into the bloodstream.

INSOLUBLE FIBER (often referred to as dietary fiber)

Insoluble fiber cannot dissolve in water and acts more like a street sweeper. It is the basis of soft, bulky stool and prevents constipation by cleaning the colon and eliminating waste.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF FIBER

- promotes weight control
- regulates blood sugar
- creates a feeling of fullness
- lowers cholesterol
- decreases the risk of heart disease
- treats constipation
- decreases the risk of certain cancers
- lessens the chance of appendicitis and diverticulosis

Sources of Soluble Fiber:

oatmeal and oat cereals, legumes (beans, peas, soy), pears, apples, oranges, strawberries, blueberries, nuts, flaxseeds, cucumbers, carrots and celery

Sources of Insoluble Fiber:

whole grains, nuts and seeds, brown rice, celery, broccoli, zucchini, green beans, dark leafy vegetables, raisins and fruits

Don't be fooled by the color of the product or marketing terms such as:

**MULTI-GRAIN
REFINED
ENRICHED WHEAT BREAD
STONE GROUND BREAD**

To be sure you are getting the benefits of the whole grain, review the ingredients list. The first item listed should specifically state **WHOLE GRAIN**.

The average American consumes only 15 grams of fiber per day, whereas the recommended daily intake of fiber is 25 to 35 grams daily.

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FOOD	AMOUNT	FIBER (grams)	FOOD	AMOUNT	FIBER (grams)
Fruits			Grains		
Apple (w/skin)	1 med	3	Brown rice, cooked	½ cup	2
Applesauce	½ cup	2	White rice, cooked	½ cup	0
Banana	1 med	3	Spaghetti, enriched	½ cup	1
Blueberries	½ cup	2	Spaghetti, whole	½ cup	3
Grapes	½ cup	1	Bread, white	1 slice	1
Oranges	1 med	3	Bread, whole	1 slice	3 to 5
Orange Juice	¾ cup	<1			
Pear (w/skin)	1 med	4	Bran Flakes	1 cup	7
Prunes	½ cup	4	Cheerios	1 cup	3
Raisins	¼ cup	2	Corn Flakes	1 cup	1
Raspberries	½ cup	4	Fiber One	½ cup	13
Strawberries	1 cup	3	Granola	½ cup	3.5
			Grape Nuts	½ cup	5
Vegetables			Oatmeal, cooked	½ cup	2
Acorn squash	½ cup, baked	5			
Broccoli	½ cup, cooked	3	Nuts and Seeds		
Carrots, raw	½ cup, cooked	2	Almonds, raw	¼ cup	4.5
Hummus	¼ cup	4	Flaxseed, ground	1 Tbsp.	2
Legumes/Lentils	½ cup	8	Granola bar, soft	1	1
Peas, green	½ cup	4	Granola bar, crunchy	1	3
Potato (w/skin)	med, baked	4	Oatmeal raisin cookie	1 med	2
Spinach, raw	1 cup	1	Peanuts	¼ cup	3
			Popcorn	3 cups	3

Source: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Due to differences in calculating fiber, values found on food labels may vary slightly from those listed.