



# Fiber

## How Much Do I Need?

	AGE 50 OR YOUNGER	AGE 51 OR OLDER
Men	38 grams	30 grams
Women	25 grams	21 grams

High fiber diets are incredibly healthy, but don't jump in too fast. Increasing fiber intake too quickly can lead to gas, bloating, and cramps. Introduce extra fiber slowly to avoid these symptoms.



## What is Fiber?

Fiber is a substance found exclusively in plants. Dietary fiber—the kind you eat—is a type of carbohydrate that is neither broken down nor absorbed by the body. It is important for its effects on digestion. You will see fiber classified as soluble or insoluble on food labels, both types are important.

### SOLUBLE FIBER

#### Dissolves in Water

In your body, it forms a gel and slows the emptying of your stomach.

- beans
- fruits
- lentils



### INSOLUBLE FIBER

#### Does not dissolve in water

It passes through your stomach intact and speeds up the passage of waste through your intestines.

- nuts
- vegetables
- whole grains



## Why is it Important?

### PREVENTS DIABETES

Fiber slows the rate at which your body absorbs sugars which helps regulate the release of insulin and stabilize your blood sugar.

### FILLS YOU UP

Fiber slows down the emptying of your stomach, which helps you feel full faster and eat less, making it a value tool in weight management.

### GIVES BOWELS A BOOST

Because your body cannot digest fiber, it passes through the intestines quickly. This has many benefits including regulating bowel movements, preventing constipation and hemorrhoids, and maintaining bowl integrity.

### REDUCES CHOLESTEROL

It prompts the liver to trap LDL cholesterol to create bile salts, reducing the amount of cholesterol in the bloodstream.

# How Can I Get More?

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**There is no shortage of fiber supplements these days, but it's best if you get it from the real deal! Before you reach for those gummy supplements or powdered drink mixes, try these natural ways to get more fiber.**

## **EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.**

For maximum fiber, eat fruits and veggies raw, leave the skins on when you can, and choose whole fruits and veggies over juice. The highest in fiber are: pears, prunes, berries, avocados, peas, squash, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, and cauliflower.

## **JUMP ON THE BRAN WAGON.**

When it comes to grain, the highest concentration of fiber is in the bran (oat bran, corn bran, wheat bran). Bran can be sprinkled into your favorite foods from hot cereal and pancakes to muffins and cookies. Refined white grains are no good for fiber (or anything else), so make the switch to whole grain pasta and brown rice.

## **ADD BEANS AND LENTILS.**

For a fiber boost, replace meat with beans or lentils for at least 2 meals per week. You will still get the protein benefit of meat with the bonus of added fiber.

## **TRY NUTS AND SEEDS.**

Add flaxseed meal or chia seeds to your smoothies or baked goods for a fiber fix. Nuts are also a good source of fiber; the best are pine nuts and almonds.



# A LIST OF HEALTHY FOODS TO HELP YOU START CONSUMING MORE FIBER



FOOD	SERVING	FIBER (g)
<b>LEGUMES</b>		
Navy or White Beans	1/2 cup	9.5
Lentils	1/2 cup	8
Black, Kidney, or Pinto Beans	1/2 cup	7.5
<b>NUTS AND SEEDS</b>		
Pine (or 'pinon') nuts	1 ounce	12
Chia seeds	1 ounce	10
Flax seeds, ground	1 ounce	8
Almonds	1 ounce	4
Pistachios or Pecans	1 ounce	3
<b>VEGETABLES</b>		
Green peas, cooked	3/4 cup	12
Acorn squash, cooked	1 cup	9
Brussels sprouts, cooked	1 cup	6
Pumpkin, canned	3/4 cup	5.25
Broccoli or Cauliflower	1 cup	5
Cabbage, cooked	1 cup	4
Kale, cooked	1 cup	3
<b>FRUIT</b>		
Avocado	1/2 fruit	6.7
Pear, medium	1	6
Prunes	1/2 cup	6
Raspberries or Blackberries	1/2 cup	4
Apple or Orange, medium	1	4
Banana, medium	1	3
<b>GRAINS</b>		
Oat bran or Wheat bran, raw	1 ounce	12
Bran flakes	3/4 cup	5.3
Quinoa, cooked	1 cup	5
Oatmeal	1 cup	4
Whole wheat bread	2 slices	3.8
Whole wheat pasta	1/2 cup	3.2
<b>"EXCELLENT"</b> Source of Fiber: more than 20% daily value per serving		
<b>"GOOD"</b> Source of Fiber: 10–20% daily value per serving		