

# HIGH FIBER DIET



Dietary fiber - found mainly in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes - is probably best known for its ability to prevent or relieve constipation. However, foods containing fiber can provide other health benefits as well, such as helping to maintain a healthy weight and lowering your risk of diabetes, heart disease and some types of cancer. Dietary fiber includes the parts of plant foods your body cannot digest or absorb. Unlike other food components, such as fats, proteins or carbohydrates - which your body breaks down and absorbs - fiber isn't digested by your body. Instead, it passes relatively intact through your stomach, small intestine and colon and out of your body.

Fiber is commonly classified as soluble, which dissolves in water, or insoluble, which does not dissolve.

**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, beans and vegetables, such as cauliflower, green beans and potatoes, are good sources of insoluble fiber.

The amount of soluble and insoluble fiber varies in different plant foods. To receive the greatest health benefit, eat a wide variety of high-fiber foods.

## DAILY FIBER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADULTS

	<u>Age 50 or younger</u>	<u>Age 51 or older</u>
Men	38 grams	30 grams
Women	25 grams	21 grams

Food to avoid while on a high fiber diet consist of refined or processed foods - such as canned fruits and vegetables, pulp-free juices, white breads and pastas, and non-whole-grain cereals - are lower in fiber. The grain-refining process removes the outer coat (bran) from the grain, which lowers its fiber content. Enriched foods have some of the B vitamins and iron added back after processing, but not the fiber. Read Food labels carefully to see how much fiber they have because fiber is found naturally in many nutritious foods.

- Baked Goods with "Added Fiber"
- Quick Cook Oats
- Whole Wheat Bread
- Cottage Cheese
- High-Fiber Fruit Juice
- Dried Fruit
- Creamed Vegetable Soup
- Microwaved Popcorn
- Fruit Cups
- High-Fiber Granola
- Fruit Snacks
- Whole Wheat Bagels
- Cereals
- Spaghetti