

HIGH FIBER DIET

What is fiber?

Dietary fiber is that part of plant foods which humans cannot digest. Fiber is an important part of our diet, but the American diet usually contains much less fiber than is needed daily.

Why do we need fiber?

Increasing the amount of fiber in the diet can help to treat constipation, irritable bowel syndrome (spastic colon), diverticulitis (seen in adults only), chronic nonspecific diarrhea, and other disorders. It may help to lower cholesterol, prevent colon cancer or heart disease later in life, or help control diabetes.

How much fiber do we need?

Recommended fiber intake for adults is 25-30 grams per day. In children, it is age + 5 (up to adult levels), so that a 5 year old child's recommended fiber intake is 10 grams per day.

What kinds of foods contain fiber?

Fiber is found in:

- WHOLE GRAINS
- FRUITS
- VEGETABLES
- BEANS
- SEEDS
- NUTS
- Products that are enriched with added fiber

How do you know how much fiber you are eating?

You can count fiber grams, just like counting fat grams or calories. Food products are required to have labeling to show how many calories, fat, fiber, vitamins, etc. are in the food. If fiber is not listed on the label, it is less than 1 gram per serving.

How do I get my child to eat these foods?

Often children are eating sufficient fiber in their diet, but not eating it daily. By counting their fiber intake, you can more readily insure that they get the right amount of fiber each day. However, many children are very short of their daily recommended fiber intake and are "picky eaters". Here are some hints:

- Read labels.
- Keep a log of your child's fiber intake until you better know the fiber content of foods.
- Use food they like to get them to eat food they don't like as well (such as putting squirt cheese on Triscuits which have about 1 gram of fiber per 2 crackers).
- Crush very high fiber cereals such as All Bran or Bran Buds into a powder (by using a food processor or other device), and add them to foods. Wheat germ with whole bran can also be used. They easily mix in with oatmeal, spaghetti sauce, casseroles, or can be added to hamburger patties or meatloaf as the food is being prepared. Be sure not to add too much or you could have an "exploding meatloaf"!

FIBER CONTENT OF HIGHER FIBER FOODS**BREADS**

Bagel	1 bagel	0.6 gram
Bran muffin	1 muffin	2.5 grams
Cornbread	2-1/2 inch square	3.4 grams
Iron Kids	1 slice	1.5 grams
Oat bran pita	1/2 piece	1.8 grams
Raisin bread	1 slice	1 gram
Wonderkids	1 slice	2 grams

CEREAL

All-Bran	1/3 cup	9 grams
Bran Buds	1/3 cup	7.9 grams
Bran Chex	2/3 cup	4.6 grams
Fruitful Bran	2/3 cup	5 grams
Mueslix	1/2 cup	6 grams
Cracklin' Oat Bran	1/2 cup	4 grams
Crunchy Corn Bran	2/3 cup	5.4 grams
Raisin Bran (various)	3/4 cup	4 grams
Oatmeal	3/4 cup	1.6 grams
Cornflakes	2/3 cup	0.2 gram

LEGUMES

Baked beans	1/2 cup	3.3 grams
Black-eyed peas, cooked	1/2 cup	8.2 grams
Kidney beans, cooked	1/2 cup	7.3 grams
Lentils, cooked	1/2 cup	4 grams
Lima beans, cooked	1/2 cup	4.5 grams
Pinto beans, cooked	1/2 cup	5.2 grams
Pork and beans	1/2 cup	8 grams

NUTS & SEEDS

Almonds	10 nuts	1.1 grams
Peanuts	10 nuts	1.4 grams
Peanut butter	2 Tablespoons	2.5 grams
Popcorn	1 Bag	12 grams
Sunflower seeds	2 Tablespoons	1 gram

PASTA, SNACKS & CRACKERS

Corn chips	1 ounce	1 gram
Egg noodles, cooked	1/2 cup	1 gram
Goldfish (Pepperidge Farm)	1 ounce	1 gram
Graham crackers	4 squares	0.8 gram
Rice, brown, cooked	1/2 cup	1.5 grams
Rice, white, cooked	1/2 cup	0.8 gram
Spaghetti, cooked	1/2 ounce	1.1 grams
Tortilla chips	1 ounce	2.5 grams

FRUITS

Apple with skin	1 medium	3.5 grams
Apricots, dried	1/2 cup	8 grams
Banana	1 medium	3.2 grams
Cantaloupe	1/4 whole	1.5 grams
Cherries	10	1.2 grams
Orange	1 medium	2.5 grams
Peach with skin	1 medium	1.5 grams
Pear with skin	1 medium	4 grams
Raspberries	1/2 cup	4 grams
Strawberries	1/2 cup	1.5 grams

VEGGIES, COOKED

Asparagus	1/2 cup	1 gram
Broccoli	1/2 cup	2.2 grams
Brussel sprouts	1/2 cup	2.3 grams
Corn	1/2 cup	4.7 grams
Corn on the cob	1 medium	5.7 grams
Green Beans	1/2 cup	1.6 grams
Potato, with skin	1 medium	2.5 grams
Spinach	1/2 cup	4 grams
Sweet potato	1 medium	3.8 grams
Zucchini	1/2 cup	1.8 grams

VEGGIES, RAW

Celery	1 stalk	0.7 gram
Carrot	1 medium	2 grams
Cucumber	1 medium	1 gram
Lettuce	1 cup	0.9 gram
Tomato	1 medium	1.5 grams
Mushrooms, sliced	1/2 cup	0.9 gram