

More on Fibre

Dietary Fibre, also known as roughage, is found only in the cell walls of plants which gives the plant its structure and form. The best sources are grain foods (high-fibre cereals, whole wheat bread, brown rice, boiled wheat, barley and whole corn), fruit, vegetables and legumes such as baked beans, dry beans and peas, lentils, chickpeas, seeds and nuts. Fibre passes almost intact through the digestive system and is not broken down by the body.

Fibre is a vital component of a healthy diet as it keeps us healthy on the inside. Many of today's health problems are related to poor eating habits and a lack of fibre in the diet. Research clearly indicates that many diseases of the digestive system such as constipation, haemorrhoids, as well as obesity, heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers are associated with insufficient fibre intakes.

There are two types of fibre – water soluble and water insoluble. The two types of fibre have different functions within the body, but both are of benefit to you and your health. Water soluble fibre helps to slow down digestion and stomach emptying and thus the entry of glucose or sugar into the bloodstream (Important news for diabetics and all who are looking for sustained energy and staying full for longer). Water soluble fibre is a friend of the heart; high cholesterol is the best known and most researched risk factor for heart disease. Simply put, water soluble fibre binds cholesterol in the gut, helping to decrease its absorption. Consuming more fibre containing foods and eating less fatty foods is one of the most important steps you can take for your heart's sake.

Water insoluble fibre helps to move food quickly through the body helping to prevent constipation and other related digestive disorders. High fibre bran cereals contain wheat bran fibres that works naturally within the body helping to sweep the toxins out of the body, whilst at the same time helping to keep you regular, feeling lighter and healthier. Fibre's full effect may not always be apparent in the first few days of eating it – Nutrition experts recommend that you TRY IT FOR 2 WEEKS – see the remarkable difference a high fibre diet can make to your inner health. The fibre in fibre rich foods are also called prebiotics, as it is the "food" of the good bacteria (probiotics), coming from yoghurt, other fermented food and probiotic supplements. Both pre-and probiotics are important for "gut health", a huge buzzword at the moment that can help to improve your immunity and even combat depression!

The recommended amount of fibre is 30g – 40g per day. Use the high fibre table below to plan high fibre foods into your daily diet. Along with an increase in your fibre intake it is important to increase your intake of water and other fluids. Fibre acts like a sponge in your bowels, it holds water and keeps the waste moving along in order for fibre to do its job properly, you must consume enough fluids.

Where to start – eating high fibre bran breakfast cereals and including a portion of whole grain or high fibre starch in every meal are simple, convenient and nutritious way to boost your fibre. So, why not make it your first step in the right direction to healthier eating.

FIBRE UP – Eat a high fibre diet for two weeks you'll love it forever!

- Aim for 3 servings each of grain products (high fibre cereals, whole wheat breads, pasta and brown rice, vegetables and fruit) per day.
- Aim for 5 – 7 servings of fruit and vegetables per day – when possible, leave the skins and peels on.
- Eat high fibre low fat snacks – for example, pick high fibre snacks such as raw vegetables, fresh fruit, and popcorn.

- Check food labels for fibre facts – which list the amount of fibre per serving or look for the words bran, whole grain or whole wheat flour listed as one of the first 5 ingredients.

So go on, take a step in the right direction and take the challenge of eating a high fibre diet – the effects are remarkable!

THE HIGH FIBRE FOOD TABLE			
Include these foods regularly into your daily meal planning :			
FOOD ITEM	SERVING SIZE	METRIC MEASURE	FIBRE CONTENT (g)
Hi - Fibre Bran (sticks)	1/2cup	150 ml (40g)	10.6
Bran Flakes	1/2 cup	200 ml (30g)	5.7
Oats Porridge	1/2 cup	125 ml	2.0
Maize Meal Porridge	1/2 cup	125 ml	0.6
Muesli	1/3 cup	(40g)	3.8
Bread, Rye	1 slice	35g	2.9
Bread, Whole wheat	1 slice	35g	2.0
Bread, Brown	1 slice	30g	2.0
Sweet Potato	1/2 cup	145g	4.4
Potato	1 medium	120g	1.8
Whole wheat Pasta	1/2 cup	75g	3.2
Brown Rice	1/2 cup	70g	1.2
Wheat biscuits	3	54g	1.0
Fruit and Vegetables			
Fig	1 large	55g	9.0
Orange	1 medium	154g	6.0
Grapefruit	1/2 medium	154g	6.0
Apple	1 medium	154g	5.0
Broccoli	1 medium stalk	148g	5.0
Brussels Sprouts	1/2 cup	100g	4.0
Butternut	1/2 cup	125g	4.0
Green Beans	1/2 cup	83g	3.0
Brinjal	1 medium	100g	3.0
Banana	1 medium	126g	3.0
Carrots	1/2 cup	75g	2.4
Spinach	1/2 cup	110g	2.4
Beetroot	1/2 cup	100g	2.0
Cabbage	1 cup	84g	2.0
Cauliflower	1/6 medium head	99g	2.0
Fruit Juice	1 cup	250 ml	0.3
Plant Protein			
White Cooked Beans	1/2 cup	135g	9.7
Almonds	1/2 cup	85g	9.5
Lentils	1/2 cup	90g	6.3

Split Peas, cooked	1/2 cup	85g	5
Cashew Nuts	1/2 cup	75g	4.6
Samp & Beans	1/2 cup	115g	4.4
Macadamia Nuts	1/2 cup	75g	4.0
Peanut Butter	1 teaspoon	5g	0.3
Pecan Nuts	1/2 cup	60g	3.9