

Benefits Of Fiber:



Fiber is a collective term, referring to components in plants which are not digested by humans.

A FIBER RICH DIET:

- ▶ Tends to be packed with many protective nutrients such as unsaturated fats, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and other beneficial plant chemicals.
- ▶ Tends to be low in harmful saturated fats, trans-fats and cholesterol.
- ▶ A heart-healthy diet should include 20-30 grams of fiber a day. Taking in at least 10 grams of soluble fiber daily can enhance the cholesterol lowering effects of a low fat diet.
- ▶ Fiber supplements are not recommended as a substitute for food. Excessive fiber from supplements can result in decreased mineral absorption and many other gastrointestinal disturbances.
- ▶ If you are currently not taking in much fiber, increase gradually to avoid any stomach distress. Also, be sure to drink plenty of fluids – remember that fiber holds water, and needs an ample supply to “do its magic”.

Two Types of Fiber

INSOLUBLE FIBER	SOLUBLE FIBER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Found in the bran layer of grains •Gives plant cell walls their structure •Types of insoluble fiber include: cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin •Doesn't dissolve in water, but it does hold water •Helps prevent constipation, hemorrhoids, and diverticulosis (a painful intestinal disease believed to be caused by a low fiber diet) •Keeps bowel movements soft and regular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Found in fruits, vegetables, oats and beans •Dissolves in water to become gummy and viscous •Types of soluble fibers include: gums, mucilages, pectin and some hemicellulose •Helps lower total and LDL cholesterol by binding bile acids, which are needed to make cholesterol; by-products of fiber breakdown interfere with cholesterol production. •Its viscosity slows digestion and absorption, resulting in lower blood sugar levels, improves insulin sensitivity. Slower digestion also helps to feel full and satisfied from food, which can lead to reduced calorie intake.

Food Sources Of Fiber

Food	Serving	Soluble Fiber (g)	Insoluble Fiber (g)	Total Fiber (g)	Calories
Fruits					
Apples (with skin)	1 medium	0.4	2.6	3.0	80
Banana	1 medium	0.5	1.3	1.8	105
Blueberries	½ cup	0.2	1.9	2.1	40
Cantaloupe	1 cup	0.2	1.0	1.2	56
Figs, raw	1 medium	0.5	4.4	4.6	111
Orange	1 medium	0.5	1.7	2.2	60
Pear (with skin)	1 medium	0.7	3.9	4.6	98
Prunes (dried)	5	1.1	2.0	3.1	100
Raisins	¼ cup	0.2	1.4	1.6	112
Raspberries	½ cup	0.3	2.3	2.6	30
Strawberries	½ cup	0.3	1.0	1.3	23
Vegetables					
Artichoke	1 medium	3.5	2.9	6.4	60
Broccoli	½ cup	0.3	2.0	2.3	22
Brussels sprouts	½ cup	0.4	2.8	3.2	30
Carrots, cooked or raw	1 medium	0.4	1.5	1.9	31
Celery	3 5" stalks	0.1	1.0	1.1	9
Corn	½ cup	0.1	1.5	1.6	66
Lettuce, romaine	1 cup	trace	0.7	0.7	8
Potato, white w/skin	1 medium	1.0	3.1	4.1	220
Potato, sweet, peeled	½ cup	0.5	1.4	1.9	91
Spinach, raw	1 cup	0.2	1.0	1.2	12
Squash, acorn	½ cup	0.3	1.6	1.9	18
Tomato, raw	1 medium	0.2	0.6	0.8	24

Food Sources Of Fiber (Cont.)

Food	Serving	Soluble Fiber (g)	Insoluble Fiber (g)	Total Fiber (g)	Calories
Legumes (all values cooked)					
Black beans (from dry)	½ cup	0.1	2.7	2.8	114
Kidney beans (canned)	½ cup	1.0	3.5	4.5	110
Lentils (from dry)	½ cup	0.1	2.8	2.9	97
Peas, green	½ cup	0.3	2.8	3.1	60
Grains					
Bread, white	1 slice	0.2	0.6	0.8	67
Bread, whole wheat	1 slice	0.3	2.2	2.5	69
Pasta, (cooked)	½ cup	0.2	0.8	1.0	100
Oatmeal, cooked	¾ cup	1.2	1.5	2.7	100
Oat bran, cooked	¾ cup	2.0	3.3	5.3	106
Rice, white, (cooked)	½ cup	0.1	0.3	0.4	100
Rice, brown, (cooked)	½ cup	0.4	3.1	3.5	108
Snacks					
Almonds, roasted	1 oz.	0.1	2.4	2.5	166
Peanuts, roasted	1 oz.	0.1	1.8	1.9	162
Popcorn (air popped)	3 cups	trace	2.4	2.4	90

References:

- 1) Brown, L et al. Cholesterol-lowering effects of dietary fiber: a meta-analysis. *Am J Clin Nutr* 1999;69:30-42.
- 2) Duff, RL. The American Dietetic Association's Complete Food & Nutrition Guide. Minneapolis: Chronimed Pub. 1996.
- 3) Marlett, J, Cheung, RD. Database and quick methods of assessing typical dietary fiber intake using data for 228 commonly consumed foods. *J Am Diet Assoc* 1997;97:1139-1148.
- 4) Pennington J (ed) *Bowes & Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used*. NY: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins 17th ed. 1998.
- 5) Van Horn, L. Fiber, Lipids, and Coronary Heart Disease. *Circulation*. 1997; 95:2701-2704