

# High-Fiber Eating Plan

Fruits and vegetables contain dietary fiber that can improve almost anyone's health. If you have — or are at risk for — certain medical conditions, a high-fiber eating plan can be very important for your health.

## What is dietary fiber?

Dietary fiber is the part of foods your body can't digest. Other parts of your food, such as fats, proteins, and carbohydrates, are broken down and absorbed. Fiber passes through your body mostly unchanged. It does not provide calories or vitamins. But it does provide a lot of health benefits.

Fiber falls into 2 categories:

- 1 **Soluble fiber** dissolves in water and is found in oats, peas, beans, barley, and many fruits.
- 2 **Insoluble fiber** does not dissolve in water and is found in whole-grain products, bran, nuts, and many vegetables.

All plant foods contain both types of fiber, some more of one type than the other. For the most benefit, eat a wide variety of high-fiber foods.



## What are the benefits?

A high-fiber eating plan can help:

- **Decrease constipation and other digestive problems.** Insoluble fiber helps soften your stool (poop) and move food through your body more quickly. This puts less pressure on your colon and decreases your risk of digestive conditions such as hemorrhoids, irritable bowel syndrome, and diverticulosis.
- **Lower blood cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease.** Soluble fiber limits the amount of cholesterol your body can absorb. If you already have high cholesterol, fiber can lower your levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol.
- **Prevent or manage diabetes.** Soluble fiber can slow the rate at which your body absorbs sugar and reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. For people with diabetes, fiber can improve blood glucose levels.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** High-fiber foods tend to make you feel more full for a longer time with fewer calories for the same amount of food.
- **Reduce the risk of certain cancers.** Eating foods rich in dietary fiber may help prevent several types of cancer, especially colorectal cancer. If you have a family history or high risk of colorectal cancer, it is best to get screened for it regularly. People over age 45 should have colorectal cancer screening every 5 to 10 years.



## Fiber content of common foods

Listed below is the fiber content of some common foods. For other foods, be sure to check the Nutrition Facts label.

<b>Breads, grains, cereals</b>	<b>Fiber</b>
All-Bran, ½ cup	9 g
Cheerios, 1 cup	3 g
Corn Flakes, 1 cup	1 g
Frosted Mini Wheats, 21 small biscuits	6 g
Grape Nuts, ½ cup	8 g
Oat bran muffin, 1 small	3 g
Oatmeal, 1 cup cooked	4 g
Plain bagel, large (4½-inch diameter)	2 g
Raisin Bran, 1 cup	7 g
Tortillas, 1 ounce whole wheat	3 g
Regular pasta, 1 cup cooked	2 g
Wheat Chex, ¾ cup	6 g
Whole wheat bread, 1 slice	2 g
Whole wheat pasta, 1 cup cooked	4 g
<b>Fruits</b>	
Apple, 1 (3" diameter) without skin	2 g
Apple, 1 (3" diameter) with skin	5 g
Apricot, 4 individual	3 g
Avocado, ½ cup sliced	5 g
Banana, 1 (7 to 7⅞ inch long)	3 g
Blueberries, ½ cup	3 g
Breadfruit, 1 cup cooked	8 g
Dates, ½ cup	6 g
Grapefruit, ½ (4" diameter)	5 g
Orange, 1 (3" diameter)	4 g
Peach, 1 (2 ⅔" diameter) with skin	2 g
Pear, 1 medium with skin	6 g
Prunes, ½ cup	6 g
Raisins, ¼ cup	2 g
Raspberries, ½ cup	4 g
Strawberries, 1 cup	3 g

<b>Vegetables (½ cup cooked)</b>	<b>Fiber</b>
Broccoli	3 g
Brussels sprouts	3 g
Cabbage	2 g
Carrots	2 g
Cauliflower	2 g
Corn	2 g
Green string beans	2 g
Jicama, 1 cup raw	6 g
Peas	4 g
Potato, 1 medium with skin, baked	4 g
Pumpkin, canned	4 g
Spinach	2 g
Summer squash or zucchini	1 g
Squash, winter	3 g
Sweet potatoes	3 g
<b>Legumes (½ cup cooked)</b>	
Baked beans	7 g
Black or pinto beans	8 g
Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)	6 g
Kidney beans	7 g
Navy beans	10 g
<b>Nuts</b>	
Almonds, 1 ounce	4 g
Cashews, 1 ounce	1 g
Chunky peanut butter 2 tablespoons	3 g
Creamy peanut butter 2 tablespoons	2 g
Peanuts, 1 ounce	2 g
<b>Fiber supplements and others</b>	
Citrucel, 1 rounded tablespoon	2 g
Chia seeds, 1 tablespoon	4 g
Metamucil, 2 rounded teaspoon	3 g
Oat bran, ¼ cup uncooked	4 g
Wheat bran, ¼ cup	6 g
Whole wheat flour, ¼ cup	3 g

## What else should I know about my high-fiber eating plan?

- **Increase the amount of fiber in your diet gradually.** When you start to eat more fiber, your body needs some time to adjust. If you eat a lot of fiber all at once, you may feel some gas and bloating. So start slowly, adding a little more fiber each day.
- **Drink at least 8 cups of water a day.** Fiber absorbs a lot of water as it moves through your colon. If you don't drink enough water, you may get constipated.
- **Use fiber supplements if recommended.** It's usually best to get fiber from the foods you eat. But if you're not able to get enough fiber through food alone, ask your doctor or dietitian if fiber supplements are a good choice for you.
- **Know who can best answer your questions.** Your dietitian can answer questions about this eating plan. Questions about medicines or symptoms should go to your doctor. You can locate an Intermountain registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) online at: [intermountainhealthcare.org/services/nutrition-services](https://intermountainhealthcare.org/services/nutrition-services).



### My dietitian and fiber plan:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

What I would like to try:

Week 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Week 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Notes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---