



Fiber Facts:

Why high-fiber foods are important

Why do I need high-fiber foods?

High-fiber foods are important for your health in many ways. Eating more high-fiber foods can help:

- Reduce your risks of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and several types of cancer.
- Keep your cholesterol and blood pressure in healthy ranges.
- Improve your digestion.

You'll also feel fuller so you may eat less, which can help with weight management.

Eating processed foods won't give you these benefits.

What is fiber?

It's the part of plant-based foods that our bodies can't digest. High-fiber foods include vegetables, fruits, beans, peas, lentils, nuts, seeds, and whole grains.

What's a whole grain?

A whole grain has all its natural nutrients, as well as fiber. Whole grains include wheat, oatmeal, rye, cornmeal, bulgur, barley, brown rice, and popcorn.

Refined grain has been milled, which removes vitamins and other nutrients along with fiber. When grain is "enriched," some nutrients are added back, but fiber isn't. For example, enriched white flour doesn't have the fiber that's in whole-wheat flour.

How much fiber do I need?

The American Heart Association recommends 25 to 38 grams of fiber daily. Most people get only about half that much. You can use these tips to make sure you're getting enough fiber.

Delicious ways to add fiber

- Eat 5 or more servings of vegetables and fruits every day. Fresh is usually most nutritious. Frozen or canned are okay too.
- Try recipes that include beans, peas, barley, lentils, quinoa, bulgur, or brown rice.
- Check labels and choose breads, cereals, tortillas, and crackers that list a whole grain (wheat, corn, etc.) as the first ingredient.
- Choose whole grains for at least half of your daily grain servings.
- Add fiber foods gradually over 2 to 3 weeks. Adding fiber too fast can give you gas or make you feel bloated.
- Drink 6 to 8 cups of water or other fluids daily (unless your doctor has told you not too).

If you use wheat bran to have regular bowel movements (poop), start with 1 teaspoon per meal. Slowly increase to 2 to 4 tablespoons a day.

If you use psyllium fiber supplements, follow label directions and get enough fluids.

Read food labels

Look for "dietary fiber" on food labels. Choose foods with at least 10 percent of the "daily value" for fiber. You can use labels to compare fiber in similar foods. For example, a whole-wheat tortilla has 3g of fiber, while a white-flour tortilla has less than 1g. A whole-wheat roti has 4g, while a white-flour roti has 1g. If you're gluten-free, it's still important to check labels for fiber.

Look for "100% whole-wheat" or "100% whole-grain" ingredients. The words "multigrain," "wheat," and "enriched flour" don't guarantee the food is whole grain.

| Nutrition Facts | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g) | |
| Servings Per Container About 8 | |
| Amount Per Serving | |
| Calories | 230 |
| | Calories from Fat 72 |
| % Daily Value* | |
| Total Fat | 8g 12% |
| Saturated Fat | 1g 5% |
| Trans Fat | 0g |
| Cholesterol | 0mg 0% |
| Sodium | 160mg 7% |
| Total Carbohydrate | 37g 12% |
| Dietary Fiber | 4g 16% |
| Sugars | 1g |
| Protein | 3g |
| Vitamin A | 10% |
| Vitamin C | 8% |
| Calcium | 20% |
| Iron | 45% |

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

| | Calories: | 2,000 | 2,500 |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Total Fat | Less than | 65g | 80g |
| Sat Fat | Less than | 20g | 25g |
| Cholesterol | Less than | 300mg | 300mg |
| Sodium | Less than | 2,400mg | 2,400mg |
| Total Carbohydrate | | 300g | 375g |
| Dietary Fiber | | 25g | 30g |

Fiber Content of Foods

| Vegetables | Serving Size | Dietary Fiber (g) | Fruits | Serving Size | Dietary Fiber (g) |
|--------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--|--------------|-------------------|
| Avocado | ½ cup | 6g | Prunes | ½ cup | 6g |
| Artichoke hearts, cooked | ½ cup | 5g | Pear, with skin | 1 medium | 5g |
| Spinach, cooked | ½ cup | 4g | Raspberries | ½ cup | 4g |
| Peas, cooked | ½ cup | 4g | Mango | 1 medium | 4g |
| Baked potato with skin | 1 medium | 4g | Raisins | ½ cup | 3g |
| Sweet potato, cooked | ½ cup | 4g | Banana | 1 medium | 3g |
| Broccoli, cooked | ½ cup | 3g | Apple, with peel | 1 medium | 3g |
| Brussel sprouts | ½ cup | 3g | Orange | 1 medium | 3g |
| Turnips, cooked | ½ cup | 2g | Strawberries, sliced | ½ cup | 2g |
| Tomato, raw | 1 medium | 2g | Peach, with skin | 1 medium | 2g |
| Swiss chard, cooked | ½ cup | 2g | Papaya | ½ cup | 1g |
| Lettuce, romaine | 2 cups | 2g | Cherries | 10 medium | 1g |
| Green beans, cooked | ½ cup | 2g | Cantaloupe | ½ cup | 1g |
| Eggplant, cooked | ½ cup | 2g | Cereal | Serving Size | Dietary Fiber (g) |
| Corn, cooked | ½ cup | 2g | Fiber One | ⅔ cup | 18g |
| Chinese mustard greens | ½ cup | 2g | All Bran (100%) cereal | ½ cup | 9g |
| Carrots, raw | 1 medium | 2g | Raisin Bran | 1 cup | 7g |
| Beets | ½ cup | 2g | Shredded Wheat | 1 cup | 6g |
| Asparagus, cooked | ½ cup | 2g | Oatmeal or Cheerios | 1 cup | 4g |
| Onions, chopped | ½ cup | 1g | Wheaties | 1 cup | 3g |
| Fennel, raw/sliced | ½ cup | 1g | Wheat bran | 2 tbs | 3g |
| Cauliflower, cooked | ½ cup | 1g | Granola | 1 cup | 3g |
| Cabbage, cooked | ½ cup | 1g | Cream of Wheat | 3 tbs | 1g |
| Zucchini, sliced | ½ cup | <1g | Grains | Serving Size | Dietary Fiber (g) |
| Beans and Nuts | Serving Size | Dietary Fiber (g) | Quinoa, cooked | 1 cup | 5g |
| Navy beans, cooked | ½ cup | 10g | Brown rice, cooked | 1 cup | 4g |
| Black beans, cooked | ½ cup | 8g | Whole-wheat pasta, cooked | 1 cup | 4g |
| Kidney beans | ½ cup | 8g | Popcorn (air-popped) | 3 cups | 4g |
| Lentils, cooked | ½ cup | 8g | Whole-wheat bread/English muffin | 1 slice | 3g |
| Pinto beans, cooked | ½ cup | 8g | Rice noodles | 1 cup | 2g |
| Lima beans, cooked | ½ cup | 7g | Rye bread | 1 slice | 2g |
| Soy beans (edamame) | ½ cup | 5g | Cornmeal | ¼ cup | 2g |
| Almonds | ¼ cup | 4g | Tortillas (corn) | 2 | 2g |
| Flaxseed, ground | 2 tbs | 4g | <p>We're here to help Search My Doctor Online at kp.org/mydoctor to learn more.</p> | | |
| Peanuts | ¼ cup | 3g | | | |
| Pecans, chopped | ¼ cup | 3g | | | |
| Pistachios | ¼ cup | 3g | | | |

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor.