

# Eating more fibre

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This handout provides you with tips on how to increase the amount of fibre in your diet.

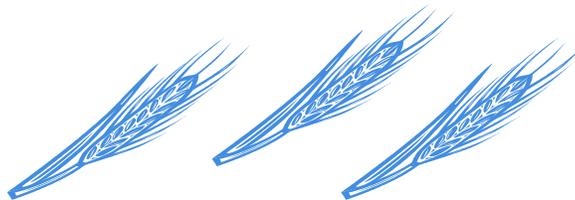
## Why do I need fibre in my diet?

Fibre in the diet is important for good health. Fibre can promote regular bowel movements. It also may help a variety of health conditions.

## What is dietary fibre?

Dietary fibre is part of all plant foods. It is the part of the plant that our bodies cannot digest. There are two types of dietary fibre: insoluble and soluble.

Some foods have more of one type of fibre than another. Your doctor or dietitian may recommend that you increase only one type of fibre to help improve your health condition. If not, aim to eat both types of fibre every day.



## What is insoluble fibre?

Insoluble fibre, once called roughage, comes from the tougher part of plants. Insoluble fibre does not dissolve in water. It holds water like a sponge. This adds bulk to the stool, making it softer and easier to pass through the digestive tract.

### Insoluble fibre can:

- prevent constipation and hemorrhoids
- reduce flare-ups in diverticular disease
- give you a feeling of fullness which may help control your appetite when you are trying to lose weight

### Sources of insoluble fibre include:

- wheat bran, wheat germ
- whole grains such as wheat, rye and barley
- whole grain breads and cereals made with whole wheat or bran
- brown rice
- vegetables such as asparagus, beets, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, corn, green peas, squash and turnip
- fruit such as apples or pears with skin, apricots, bananas, all types of berries, citrus fruit and prunes
- nuts



## What is soluble fibre?

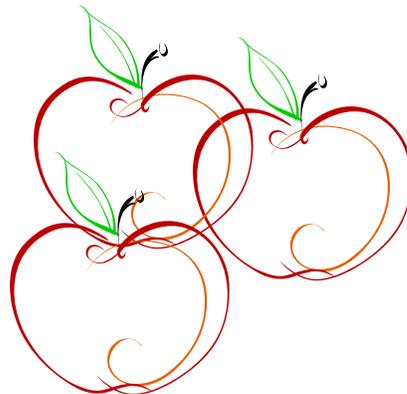
Soluble fibre dissolves in water to form a gel.

### Soluble fibre can:

- thicken stools, which can control diarrhea and reduce the urge to have a bowel movement
- help to lower blood cholesterol levels and risk of heart disease when combined with a healthy, low fat eating plan
- delay stomach emptying, leading to slower digestion of food

### Sources of soluble fibre include:

- dried or canned legumes such as kidney beans, chick peas or lentils
- oats, oat bran, barley, ground flax seed and psyllium
- fruit such as apples, apricots, bananas, citrus fruit, pears, prunes and strawberries
- vegetables such as artichoke, broccoli, brussel sprouts, carrots, corn and squash
- fibre supplements such as Metamucil™ or Benefibre™



## What's the best way to increase my fibre intake?

### Grains/Flour

- Start your day with a cereal or bread product that contains at least 4 grams of fibre per serving. If your favourite cereal is less than 2 grams, add a scoop of high fibre cereal to it.
- Add 1 to 2 tablespoons of wheat bran, wheat germ or ground flax seed to yogurt, cold or hot cereals or when making baked goods.
- Replace  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the amount of all purpose flour with whole wheat flour in your favourite recipes. For example, if a recipe calls for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups all purpose flour, use  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup whole wheat and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup all purpose flour.
- Choose whole grain breads (such as pita, bagel, English muffin, tortilla, wrap, bun), cereals, pastas and brown rice.
- Try using grains such as whole wheat couscous, barley, bulgar, quinoa and kasha in salads, soups, chili and casseroles.

### Vegetables and Fruits

- Include 1 to 2 servings of vegetables and fruits at each meal and snack.
- Eat raw vegetables and fruits instead of juice. For even more fibre, serve vegetables with a bean dip such as hummus.
- When eating fruit and vegetables, wash well and keep the skin on when possible.
- Add dried fruit to cereals or your favourite baked goods.

### Legumes

- Legumes can replace meat in many recipes. Try using legumes such as lentils, beans and peas in salads, soup or casseroles.
- Steamed edamame (shelled green soybeans) makes a great snack.

### Nuts and Seeds

- Add nuts and seeds to salads, cereals and yogurt.
- Eat them as a snack.

### Meat and Milk Products

- Do not naturally contain fibre. Choose yogurts with fruit and grains added.
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## What is the Nutrition Facts table?

The Nutrition Facts table gives details about the nutrition breakdown of the food product. The amount of fibre is listed in the Nutrition Facts table. Use this to compare the fibre in different products and make the best choice.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 Bagel (112 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 310	
Fat 2 g	3%
Saturated 0.4 g	
+ Trans 0 g	2%
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 340 mg	14%
Carbohydrate 61 g	20%
Fibre 3 g	11%
Sugars 5 g	
Protein 11 g	
Vitamin A	0%
Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	2%
Iron	25%

Amount of food in one serving. The serving size is the amount most often eaten. This may or may not be the serving size you would have.

Amount of fibre in one serving.

## What do nutrition claims tell me?

Nutrition claims are statements about certain nutrients in a product.

If you see these claims about fibre on a food sold in Canada, it means you are getting these amounts:

**"Source of fibre"** = at least 2 grams or more of fibre per serving

**"High fibre"** = at least 4 grams or more of fibre per serving

**"Very high fibre"** = at least 6 grams or more of fibre per serving

**Caution:** The claims whole grain, whole wheat, multigrain and organic do not always mean the product is high in fibre. To be sure of the fibre content, read the Nutrition Facts table.

## Am I getting enough fibre in my diet?

Fibre is an important part of a healthy diet for everyone. The amount of fibre we need changes as we go through different stages of the lifecycle. Children need to gradually increase the fibre in their diets as they get older.

This chart lists the recommended fibre intakes for the different ages and genders. In general, adults should aim to eat a total of 25 to 38 grams of fibre per day.

Age and gender	Recommended Fibre intake (grams a day)
Children: 1 to 3 years	19
4 to 8 years	25
Males: 9 to 13 years	31
14 to 50 years	38
50+ years	30
Females: 9 to 18 years	26
19 to 50 years	25
50+ years	21
Pregnancy	28
Breastfeeding	29

Source: Dietary Reference Intakes for Energy, Carbohydrate, Fibre, Fat, Fatty Acids, Cholesterol, Protein and Amino Acids (2002).

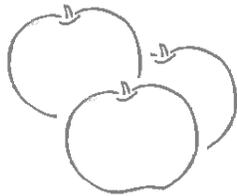
A list of high fibre foods appears on page 8.

## Before you increase your fibre ...

Your body will need to adjust to more fibre in your diet. Increasing fibre too quickly or without drinking enough liquids may cause gas, bloating, cramping, diarrhea or constipation.

1. Add fibre-rich foods slowly to your diet. For example, add one new high fibre food each day for one week.
2. Drink 8 to 10 cups of fluids a day when increasing your fibre intake.

## Try this ...



### Bran Apple Blend

(makes 17 - 2 tbsp servings)

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup applesauce

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup All Bran Original<sup>®</sup> cereal

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup prune juice

Mix all ingredients together well. Refrigerate. Use as a spread on toast, mix into hot cereal or yogurt or eat by the spoonful.

1 serving = 2 tbsp = 3 g dietary fibre

### For more information ...

Contact your Registered Dietitian, Dietetic Assistant or family doctor.

#### Conversions:

1 cup = 250 ml

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup = 175 ml

1 tbsp = 15 ml

1 oz = 30 g

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## Common foods with fibre

Food Serving Sizes unless otherwise shown	2 to 3 grams	4 to 6 grams	more than 6 grams
<b>Breads</b> 2 slices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bran muffin -1 small</li> <li>• cornbread</li> <li>• multigrain</li> <li>• pumpernickel</li> <li>• rye</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% whole wheat bran</li> <li>• cracked wheat</li> <li>• Mr. Pita, High Fibre® - 1 pita</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dempster's, Healthy Way®</li> <li>• Country Harvest Fibre®</li> </ul>
<b>Cereals</b> Portion size varies. Read Nutrition Facts table on package to see the portion size.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• oat bran</li> <li>• Shredded Wheat®</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit and Fibre®</li> <li>• Raisin Bran®</li> <li>• Kashi® GoLean Crunch - Honey Almond Flax</li> <li>• Corn Bran Squares®</li> <li>• Kellogg's Special K Protein</li> <li>• Bran cereal flakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% Bran®</li> <li>• All Bran Original®</li> <li>• All Bran Buds®</li> <li>• Fibre First®</li> <li>• Fibre One®</li> </ul>
<b>Grains</b> 1/2 cup, cooked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cornmeal</li> <li>• natural bran - 1 tbsp</li> <li>• wheat germ</li> <li>• whole wheat pasta</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brown rice</li> <li>• bulgar</li> <li>• Barilla Plus Pasta®</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• barley</li> </ul>
<b>Crackers</b> Portion size varies. Read Nutrition Facts table on package to see the portion size.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President's Choice Swedish Crisp Toasts®</li> <li>• President's Choice 100% Wheat or Wheat Bran 'n Rye Crackers®</li> <li>• Wasa Light or Sesame Wheat Crispbreads®</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ryvita Crisp Breads®</li> <li>• Wasa Golden Rye Crispbreads®</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wasa Whole Rye, Fibre or Hearty Rye Crispbreads®</li> </ul>
<b>Cookies</b> Portion size varies. Read Nutrition Facts table on package to see the portion size.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Bran Bars®, All Bran Snack Bites®</li> <li>• fig and granola bars</li> <li>• macaroon, oatmeal, peanut butter and raisin cookies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fibre One Bars®</li> <li>• Kashi® granola bars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bowel Buddies®</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables and Legumes</b> 1/2 cup, cooked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• asparagus, broccoli, brussel sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, corn, eggplant, green peas, spinach, squash</li> <li>• 1 baked potato with skin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 artichoke</li> <li>• black beans, chick peas, kidney beans, lentils, northern beans, pinto beans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• black-eyed peas, navy beans</li> </ul>
<b>Fruit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 apple, banana or orange</li> <li>• 3 apricots</li> <li>• 1/2 cup raspberries or rhubarb</li> <li>• 1 cup strawberries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 pear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup blackberries</li> <li>• 10 dried dates, figs or prunes</li> </ul>
<b>Nuts and Seeds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/4 cup almonds, peanuts (dry roasted)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 tbsp flaxseed (ground)</li> </ul>	

## Sample Meal Plan

Meal	Low Fibre	Grams	High Fibre	Grams
<b>Breakfast</b>	Special K cereal, 1 cup	1	Raisin Bran cereal, 1 cup	6
	Milk, 1%, ½ cup	0	Milk, 1%, ½ cup	0
	Orange juice, 1 cup	0.6	Orange	2.3
	Yogurt, 100 g	0	Yogurt, 100 g	0
<b>Lunch</b>	Grilled cheese, white bread	1	Grilled cheese, whole grain bread	4
	Vegetable soup, 1 cup	3	Split pea soup, 1 cup	7
	Apple, with skin	2.6	Pear, with skin	5.1
<b>Snack</b>	Nutri Grain bar	2	Kasha granola bar	4
<b>Dinner</b>	Chicken, 100 g	0	Chicken, 100 g	0
	Rice, white, 1 cup	0.9	Rice, brown, 1 cup	3.5
	Beans, green, ½ cup	1.6	Peas, green, ½ cup	4.4
	Ice cream, vanilla	0	Ice cream, vanilla	0
			Strawberries, sliced, 1 cup	3.3
<b>Snack</b>	Pretzel sticks, 50 g	1.5	Popcorn, 3 cups, 3 g	3.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>14.2</b>		<b>43.1</b>