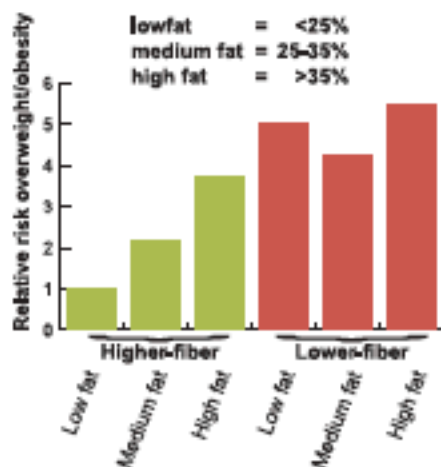


Fiber Is Your Friend



When you eat a healthy diet rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and beans/legumes, you'll get most of the fiber you'll need, and you'll be better able to control your weight and lower your risk for many diseases, including diabetes and heart disease.

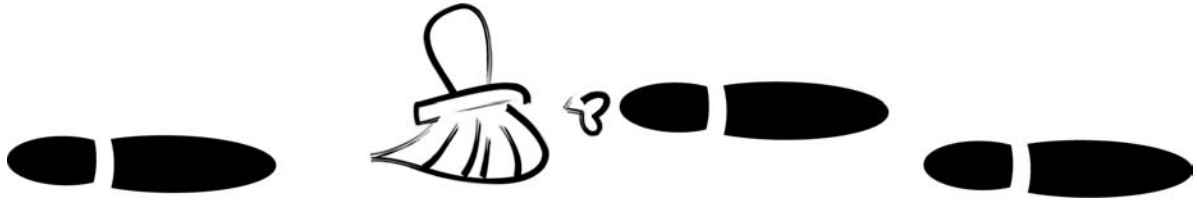


4 Easy Ways to Increase Your Fiber Intake:

- 1) Choose whole grains more often.
- 2) Start your day with a high-fiber breakfast.
- 3) Get enough fruits and veggies each day.
- 4) Enjoy beans in your meals more often.

The recommended intake of dietary fiber is 14 grams per 1,000 calories or about double of what most people eat.

On the Trail of Dietary Fiber



First, we'll need the answers to two basic questions, "What is fiber?" and "Where is it found?"

What is it?

- Fiber is the parts of plant foods that are not digested by the human body.
- Fiber lends structure, texture and support to plant foods.
- Fiber is a complex carbohydrate.
- Fiber has no calorie value.

Notice that fiber is part of PLANT foods – the trail begins and ends here.

Where does one find fiber?

Fiber is found in whole plant foods:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole-grain foods: breads, cereals, pasta and rice
- Beans, peas and lentils
- Nuts and seeds

You won't find fiber in meat, poultry, milk, dairy products or fats.

Are there different types of fiber?

While the total amount of dietary fiber in your diet is what's important, we typically classify fiber as either **soluble** or **insoluble**.

Soluble fiber:

- Lowers blood cholesterol
- Helps to control blood sugar
- Makes you feel full after a meal (satiety)

- Sources include oat bran, oatmeal, barley, rye, peas, beans, carrots, apples and oranges.

Insoluble fiber:

- Gets credit for promoting GI health via normal laxation – it absorbs water, which makes it heavier and allows it to pass more quickly.
- Sources are fruits, vegetables, beans, wheat bran, brown rice and other whole grains.

In real life, the distinction between fibers is not so simple. Fiber-rich foods usually have both types of fiber, and a high-fiber diet should provide enough of each. It is your total fiber intake that counts – we will explore "how much" a little farther down the trail!

