



High Fiber Diet

Fiber is a carbohydrate that the body can't digest. Fiber is found in:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Beans
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Whole grain foods

A high fiber diet can be helpful if you have constipation or hard, painful bowel movements. Many foods are high in fiber and there are easy ways to increase your intake of fiber without changing everything you eat.

Be sure to increase your fiber intake gradually, and with enough fluids, because water helps fiber pass through the digestive tract smoothly. A general goal is to drink 64 ounces (8 cups) of water or other non-caffeinated beverages per day.

Recommended daily intake of fiber:

- 38 g of fiber per day for men
- 25 g of fiber per day for women

How can I eat more fiber?

1. Eat a variety of whole grain breads and cereals. Look on the ingredient label for 100% whole wheat, rye, oats or bran as the first or second ingredient
2. Include other grains in your diet such as:
 - Brown rice
 - Barley
 - Oats
 - Kamut
 - Quinoa
3. Add beans, lentils, nuts and seeds to your meals
4. Enjoy fruits and vegetables in their whole form instead of as a juice. Try eating them with the skins/peels on if you can tolerate it. The skin and peel provide a greater dose of fiber.
5. Look at the nutrition facts labels and try to choose products with more fiber per serving

For example:

Food item	Fiber amount
1/2 cup dry, uncooked oats	4 grams
½ cup dry, uncooked quinoa	6 grams
2 tbsp. chia seeds	10 grams
½ cup canned black beans	5 grams

What are practical ideas for adding fiber to my diet?

- Add chia seed or flax seed to oatmeal and smoothies, or make chia pudding
- Snack on fruits and vegetables with hummus
- Add beans or refried beans to a burrito bowl
- Add nuts or seeds to your favorite salad
- Make baked goods with wheat bran
- Switch out white bread for 100% whole wheat
- Use whole wheat or chickpea noodles for pasta
- Add extra vegetables to a curry

*In addition to eating high fiber, specific foods can help with constipation, such as prunes and kiwifruit

What cereals have a high amount of fiber?

- All-Bran Original (12 grams fiber per serving)
- Fiber One (18 grams fiber per serving)
- All-Bran Buds (17 grams fiber per serving)
- Kashi GO Original (12 grams fiber/serving)

The goal is 1-2 soft bowel movements per day, you can add cereal to your diet to reach this goal by doing the following:

- Start with 1/3 to 1/2 cup of high fiber cereal every day.
 - It may take up to 1-2 weeks for a noticeable difference.
- You may consider increasing the amount of cereal to 1/2 or 1 cup per day to reach your bowel movement goal.

What fiber supplements can I take?

The fiber supplements below can help treat constipation by absorbing liquid in the intestine. This creates softer and easier to pass stools, leading to a healthier digestive system.

- Psyllium (found in Metamucil/Konsyl)
- Methylcellulose (found in Citrucel)
- Polycarbophil calcium (Found in FiberCon)

How should I use these supplements?

1. Check the package to see how many grams of fiber are in one serving and instructions.
2. Begin with one serving, once per day for 1 week.
3. As needed, increase gradually to 2-3 servings per day to get the desired effect.

Using these products may increase bloating and gas initially. This does not indicate a problem and it often lessens with time. Be sure to consume lots of non-caffeinated fluids daily while taking fiber supplements.

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