

# Fibre in Food



## What is fibre?

Fibre mainly comes from fruit, vegetables, grains and foods made with these such as breakfast cereals, bread and pasta. Fibre comes in either insoluble or soluble form. These forms provide different benefits but are equally important.

### What are the benefits of fibre?

Soluble fibre:

- slows down the rate that the body absorbs sugar
- helps lower cholesterol
- is mainly found in fruit, vegetables, peas, beans, lentils and oats.

Insoluble fibre:

- promotes healthy bowel function and prevents constipation
- is found mainly in wheat-based breakfast cereals, bread, pasta and rice.

## How can I eat more fibre foods?

All plant foods contain fibre. Meals and snacks based on plenty of bread, cereals, fruit and vegetables are best. Encouraging the whole family to eat these foods promotes healthy choices for everyone.

Fibre Food	Tips
<b>Peas, beans</b> (for example red kidney or baked) and <b>lentils</b>	Add these to home-made soups stews and mince.
<b>Vegetables</b> Include vegetables with meals and snacks every day	There are many ways of preparing vegetables with lots of varieties to choose from. Keep trying different things to find new tastes and to keep your diet interesting. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● salad in sandwiches or served with a main meal</li><li>● in home-made soups and sauces</li><li>● as snacks with a low-fat dip, for example salsa</li><li>● pizza toppings.</li></ul>
<b>Fruit</b> Aim to eat two to three portions a day	Fruit is naturally sweet and tastes great on its own or added to cereals, yoghurts and puddings. Fruit can also be used to give a natural sweetness to home baking.
<b>Bread</b>	Wholegrain or wholemeal breads contain the most fibre and high-fibre white breads can be a good stepping-stone from white to wholemeal.
<b>Cereals</b>	Wholegrain breakfast cereals, for example wheat biscuits, bran flakes, fruit and fibre are all excellent choices. If eating these is new, it can be helpful to mix them with a lower-fibre cereal, for example cornflakes or Rice Krispies, to start with.

## Can children eat too much fibre?

Foods that contain fibre can be quite filling. Younger children, particularly pre-school age, may find them too filling. Ask your dietitian if you have concerns about this.

## Remember

It is not necessary to increase your fibre intake suddenly. A good start would be to include some of the suggested foods most days. Make sure that you take enough fluid to avoid constipation (approximately six to eight cups/glasses or 1.5 litres per day).

## Supporting patient care nationwide

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