

VILLAGE HEALTH CLINIC

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Dietary Fiber

Fiber is the substance in plant food that is not digested by humans, but plays an important part in an individual's diet. There are two types of fiber, soluble fiber and insoluble fiber. Soluble fiber is found in fruits and vegetables, as well as oat bran, barley and legumes. Insoluble fiber's major source is in the bran layers of cereal grains.

Fiber plays many roles in the human function.

1. High fiber diets have been shown to be effective in weight loss. Fiber foods tend to be low in calories, sugar and fat. In addition, fiber adds bulk to the diet and provides a sense of satiety.
2. Fiber functions like a sponge, holding water, binding minerals and binding acidic materials. Attracting water into the digestive tract with fiber softens the stools and prevents constipation.
3. Insoluble fiber speeds up transit time of food materials through the digestive tract, preventing exposure of the tissue to toxic agents in food.
4. Fiber binds fats to excrete them from the body.
5. Fiber slows down the absorption of carbohydrates which produces a smaller rise in blood sugar.
6. Soluble fiber slows down transit time of food material allowing for absorption of important nutrients.

It is recommended that we consume 25 -35 grams of dietary fiber from a variety of sources, every day. The best sources of fiber come from fruits, vegetables, legumes and grains. Many sources contain both soluble and insoluble fiber.

Fruits	Fiber grams		Fiber grams		Fiber grams
Figs (3)	5.3	Orange	3.1	Applesauce	1.5
Apple w/skin	4.7	Kiwi	2.6	Peach	1.4
Pears	4.3	Strawberries (6)	2.0	Cantaloupe (1/4)	1.1
Dates (5)	3.7	Raisins (1/4 cup)	1.9	Pineapple (1/2 c.)	0.9
Apricots (10)	3.6	Banana	1.8	Grapefruit (1/2)	0.7
Prunes (5)	3.5	Blueberries (25)	1.7	Watermelon (1 c.)	0.6
(serving size is one piece or as noted)					

Vegetables	Fiber grams		Fiber grams		Fiber grams
Baked Potato w/skin	4.2	Broccoli	2.0	Green beans	0.9
Sweet Potato	3.4	Spinach (1c.)	2.0	Tomato (1/2)	0.8
Corn	3.1	Turnip	1.6	Celery (1 stalk)	0.6
Peas	2.9	Beets	1.5	Green pepper (1 stalk)	0.6
Winter squash	2.9	Cabbage	1.5	Lettuce (1 c)	0.6
Carrot (1)	2.3	Cauliflower	1.4	Mushrooms	0.5
(serving size is 1/2 cup unless noted)					

Legumes	Fiber grams		Fiber grams		Fiber grams
Pinto beans	14.2	Lima beans	10.3	Lentils	5.6
Kidney beans	13.8	Navy beans	9.0	Split peas	4.1
Black-eyed peas	12.3	Chickpeas	7.1	Tofu	1.4
(serving size is 3/4 cup of cooked beans)					

Grains

Barley
Bulgur
(serving size is 1 cup)

Fiber
grams
8.6
8.1

Quinoa
Brown rice

Fiber
grams
4.6
3.3

Wheat
White rice

Fiber
grams
3.1
1.3