

Fiber Fitness Jim Golick CCN, LDN

Most Americans do not obtain enough fiber, averaging only about 12 grams per day, which results in poor bowel function and constipation. The recommended daily fiber consumption should be about 25-35 grams for an adult.

A typical diet contains about 75%:25% ratio of insoluble fiber: soluble fiber. Soluble fiber forms a gel when mixed with liquid, while insoluble fiber does not. Insoluble fiber passes through our intestines largely intact. Few foods dominate in soluble fiber. Some foods such as oat, oat bran, psyllium husk and flax seed are rich in both insoluble and soluble fiber. Also ensure adequate liquids for good bowel function.

Some sources of fiber can also have a high glycemic index which implies an ability to convert more quickly into glucose and elevate blood sugar. Potatoes and bread, for example, may need to be reduced, if weight loss and blood sugar control is a goal. This is especially true for O blood types which tend to do better on a high protein and low carb diet.

It may take several weeks for your elimination to improve. As it improves, wastes are eliminated along with toxins and excess hormones* instead of your body reabsorbing them. This can aid in reducing weight, certain cancers, cholesterol and cardiovascular disease, hemorrhoids, diverticulosis, obesity and diabetes.

<p>▪ <u>Functions of Soluble Fiber</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bind with fatty acids • prolong stomach emptying time so that sugar is released and absorbed more slowly 	<p><u>Functions of Insoluble Fiber</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move bulk through the intestines • control and balance the pH (acidity) in the intestines
<p>▪ <u>Benefits of Soluble Fiber</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lower total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol), reducing risk of heart disease • regulate blood sugar for people with diabetes 	<p><u>Benefits of Insoluble Fiber</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote regular bowel movements and prevent constipation • remove toxic waste through the colon • help prevent colon cancer by keeping an optimal pH in intestines to prevent microbes from producing cancerous substances
<p><u>Sources of Soluble Fiber</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oatmeal and Oat bran • Dried beans and peas • Nuts • Barley • Flax seed* & Psyllium husks • Oranges, grapefruit and grapefruit pectin, apples and apple pectin, • Carrots (50/50 sol/insol) • Glucomannan (Konjac root) capsules • Prunes 	<p><u>Sources of Insoluble Fiber</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried beans and peas • Vegetables such as green beans and dark green leafy vegetables • Fruit skins and root vegetable skins • Whole-wheat products • Wheat and rice bran • Nuts & Seeds

***Flax** is also the most prolific source of plant **lignans**, which have been reported to help improve prostate health, reduce menopausal symptoms, promote heart health, benefit breast health and help acne and hair loss. Lignans are naturally occurring plant compounds classified as phytoestrogens, which can modulate the metabolism and use of estrogen and testosterone.

Below are some typical high fiber foods. Fiber shown is for a 1/2 cup serving unless noted:

- Apple or pear, 4 grams - medium
- Banana, 3 grams - medium
- Beans, 6-10 grams - baked, black, great northern, kidney, garbanzo, pinto, white
- Berries, 4-5 grams - blackberries, raspberries
- Bran Cereals, 5-10 grams - All-Bran, Bran Buds, 100% Bran, Raisin Bran, Kashi™
- Bread, 4-6 grams-- 2 slices whole wheat, pumpernickel, seven-grain, Ezekiel™
- Broccoli, 4-5 grams
- Carrots, 3-4 grams
- Dates (5 pitted), 3 grams
- Dried Figs (3), 10 grams
- Greens, 4-6 grams - beet greens, collards, kale, spinach, turnip greens
- Lentils, 6 grams
- Oats, 3-4 grams —oatmeal, steel cut, oat bran
- Peas, 7-9 grams - black-eyed peas, green peas
- Potato, 4-5 grams - medium baked Idaho or sweet potato
- Prunes (4 dried)-2 grams
- Sweet Corn, 5 grams

If you include more of the high fiber foods and still are not having a daily bowel movement, you may wish to add a fiber supplement. The best fiber supplements are rice bran or flax seed meal*, barley fiber, apple pectin, or psyllium husks or seeds.

NOW® Apple Psyllium Fiber is a reasonably priced, pleasant tasting combination of apple fiber and psyllium sweetened with a bit of fructose. **1 TBSP = 7 grams of fiber**

NOW Fivacious™ Cinnamon Nut or Chocolate Chip Fiber Bars make it easier than ever to ensure that you're getting the fiber your body needs. Each great tasting, low sodium snack bar packs an impressive **9 grams of fiber** from five of today's most effective sources-organic dried plums, organic oat bran, organic flax, apple pectin and psyllium husk.

Glucomannan is a soluble, bulk-forming fiber derived from the konjac root. Glucomannan can provide temporary relief of constipation and may help to maintain serum lipid levels already within the healthy range. In addition, because Glucomannan helps to promote satiety (feeling of fullness), it can be an effective addition to a weight management plan. **3-750mg capsules = 1.7 gms fiber**