



# HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK

## 4/4: Fiber

### What is Fiber?

Fiber is a substance in plants. It's a type of carbohydrate. But unlike other carbohydrates, fiber can't be broken down and absorbed by your digestive system.



### Types of Fiber

There are 2 types of fibers: soluble and insoluble. Most foods have both insoluble and soluble fiber but are usually richer in one type. Here's an easy way to tell them apart: Soluble fiber absorbs water, turning into a gel-like mush. Think of what happens when you add water to oatmeal. Insoluble fiber doesn't absorb water. Think of what happens when you add water to celery. To get full benefit, you should consume both soluble and insoluble fiber.

| Examples of Soluble Fiber |               | Examples of Insoluble Fiber |                   |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Oatmeal                   | Citrus fruits | Seeds                       | Skins of fruit    |
| Berries                   | Beans         | Brown rice                  | Whole wheat bread |
| Peas                      | Oats          | Green beans                 | Potatoes          |
| Apples                    | Barley        | Nuts                        | Cauliflower       |



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## Amazing Benefits of Fiber

- Weight loss and weight maintenance: Fiber- rich foods fill you up faster and keep you satisfied longer.
- Decreased risk for type II diabetes: Fiber does not cause a spike in blood glucose the way other carbohydrates can.
- Lowered odds of developing heart disease: Fiber aids in the prevention of heart disease by lowering cholesterol.
- Healthier gut bacteria: Fiber leaves your stomach undigested and ends up in your colon, where it feeds friendly gut bacteria.
- Reduced risk of certain cancers: A large body of literature suggests that eating a variety of high fiber foods has a protective effect against colon cancer. Evidence also shows that a high fiber diet may be protective against breast, ovary, endometrial, and gastrointestinal cancer.
- Increased longevity: In a 2016 study, older people who ate fiber-rich diets were 80 percent more likely to live longer and stay healthier than those who did not consume enough fiber.
- Regular bowel movements: Fiber improves digestion and makes your poop softer and bulkier. This speeds its passage through your body and prevents constipation.
- Natural detox: Soluble fiber naturally scrubs and promotes the elimination of toxins from your G.I. tract by soaking up harmful compounds, unhealthy fats and excessive carbohydrates before they can be absorbed in your body achieved by adding flax oil to your diet or by taking a good quality omega-3 supplement.

## How Much Fiber Should You Have Each Day?

- Adults should have 25 to 30 g of fiber each day. However, the average American gets only 8-10 g of fiber. Pardon the pun, but that is due to a crappy diet!
- It's really not difficult to get 25 to 30 g of fiber each day if you eat properly. Start with breakfast. Eat a bowl of oatmeal with chia seeds in the morning and you'll be half-way there. Depending on the portion size, you could ingest 13-14 g in one meal.



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