



Nutrition Fact Sheet

Fibre

It is important to eat enough fibre in your diet for a variety of reasons:

- It helps maintain a healthy gut
- It helps prevent constipation, and serious bowel disorders
- It is useful for controlling blood sugar
- It helps prevent re-absorption of cholesterol and eliminates it from the body
- It helps absorb and expel toxins, preventing re-absorption
- It is a chelating agent, absorbing heavy metals and eliminating them

Also, low fibre diets are associated with constipation, gastrointestinal disorders, diverticulosis and colon cancer, all of which can cause misery to the sufferer. An adequate intake of fibre can also reduce the risk of appendicitis.

So how much fibre do you need?

In an ideal world we would all be getting somewhere in the region of 30 – 35 gm a day. The western diet however – even a good one – is not particularly high in fibre. Studies have shown average fibre intake to be somewhere in the region of 10 – 15 gm, which leaves quite a shortfall.

There are two ways to bridge this gap – eat more foods high in fibre, or take a fibre supplement – something many people choose as it is quick and easy and takes the guesswork out of things! See the food fibre table for information on food high in fibre. We shall look at beneficial fibre supplements in the supplement section.

There are two types of fibre – soluble and insoluble.

Insoluble fibre – bulks up waste matter and can act like a 'brush' sweeping out the gut and preventing constipation. Because of this bulking effect it leaves you feeling full immediately after eating. Wheat bran is an example of insoluble fibre and, due to its scouring effect it can exacerbate some gut problems.

Soluble fibre – this dissolves in the gut and becomes a jelly-like substance which can absorb various toxins and wastes and carry them out of the body. Soluble fibre also slows down the rate of digesting food, and therefore the release of any sugar held in the food, so is beneficial for stabilizing blood sugar levels – often a very important part of achieving weight loss. Soluble fibre can also help reduce appetite for anything up to 8 – 9 hours. So adequate amounts of fibre can really help any weight loss plan in one of a number of different ways. Soluble fibre is found in beans, lentils, oats and many fruits

Many foods contain both types of fibre – vegetables, fruit, oats, lentils and beans tend to be most effective. Oats in particular are particularly effective at controlling blood sugar.

Good Sources of Various Form of Fibre		
Cellulose & Hemicellulose	Lignin	Pectin, Gums & Mucilage
Apples	Green beans	Apples
Green beans	Bran	Bananas
Beets	Muesli	Green beans
Bran (rice)	Eggplant	Cabbage
Broccoli	Pears	Cauliflower
Brussel Sprouts	Radishes	Carrots
Cabbage	Strawberries	Citrus Fruit (pith)
Carrots		Grapes
Eggplant		Linseeds
Whole grain flour		Oatmeal
Pears		Potatos
Peas		Sesame seeds
Radishes		Strawberries
Sweet peppers		Squash