

Texas Children's Hospital

Caring for Your Child's Health

High Fiber Diet

This handout will tell you about:

- Why we need fiber
- How much fiber we need
- How to help your child eat more fiber
- Preventing constipation
- High fiber diet guidelines
- High fiber recipes

Why we need fiber

Fiber helps children and adults have regular bowel movements and helps prevent constipation and other health problems. Dietary fiber helps keep the bowel and digestive tract healthy and enhances feelings of fullness after eating.

How much fiber

To find out the number of grams of fiber in a certain food, read the label, or see the foods listed in this handout. High fiber foods contain 3 or more grams of fiber per serving.



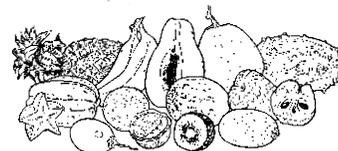
Age	Fiber per day
1 to 3 years	19 grams
4 to 8 years	25 grams
Girls 9 to 13 years	26 grams
Boys 9 to 13 years	31 grams
Girls 14 to 18 years	29 grams
Boys 14 to 18 years	38 grams

How to help your child eat more fiber

A high fiber diet should be a balanced diet with foods from all the food groups. The most common sources of fiber are whole grains breads and cereals,

legumes and nuts, fruits and vegetables. Include these in your child's balanced diet.

- Offer your child a variety of high fiber foods during the day rather than giving only one or two high fiber foods.
- Mix a high fiber cereal with a cereal your child likes.
- Offer fresh fruits with the skin on. Prunes and pears act as natural laxatives.
- Fruit juice, such as prune or pear juice, may also be used as a natural laxative (however limit to 4-6 fl. oz. per day).
- Offer raw vegetables such as carrots, jicama or cherry tomatoes for snacks and with meals. Offer a salad with dark green lettuce each day.
- Use whole wheat bread or white bread with added fiber, brown rice, whole wheat crackers, bran muffins, barley, bran cereals or oatmeal. Use less refined white flour breads, cereals and other starches.
- Offer snacks that have fiber, like granola bars, fruit bars, fig cookies or popcorn (after age 3.)
- Help your child develop a taste for bran. Try to include 2 to 4 tablespoons of some form of bran each day.
- Add nuts or seeds to breads and salads, or use them as a snack. (This is not recommended for children under age 3.)



Preventing constipation

If your child is constipated, follow the dietary guidelines above. Also, encourage your child to

drink at least 4 to 8 cups (32 – 64 ounces) of fluid per day, preferably water, lowfat milk and low-sugar decaffeinated beverages.

High fiber diet guidelines

Read labels on foods, and look for three or more grams of fiber per serving.

Eat three or more servings each day of breads and cereals made from whole grains and bran. A serving is about 1/2 cup of cereal or grains or 1 slice of bread.

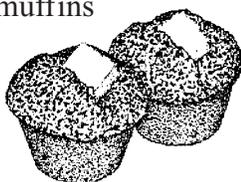
Examples

Whole wheat and bran bread and muffins

Brown rice

Popcorn

Oatmeal



High fiber dry cereals (1/2 cup serving)

Fiber One	13 grams
100% Bran	12 grams
All Bran	12 grams
Bran Buds	12 grams
Kelloggs Complete Bran Flakes	5 grams
Grape Nuts	5 grams
Raisin Bran	3 to 5 grams
Cracklin' Oat Bran	4 grams
100% Whole Grain Wheat Chex	3 grams
Fruit and Fibre	3 grams
Great Grains	3 grams
Frosted Mini Wheats	3 grams
Kelloggs Low Fat Granola	3 grams
Cheerios	2 grams
Wheaties	2 grams

Eat five or more servings each day of fruits and vegetables including beans. A serving of fruit is usually one piece. One serving of vegetables is 1/2 to 1 cup.

Examples

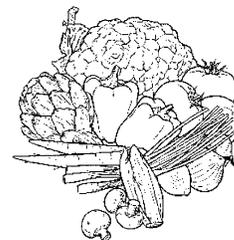
Fruits

Pear	4 grams
Strawberries (1 cup)	3 grams
Apple (with skin)	3 grams
Dried fruits like raisins (3 Tablespoons)	3 grams
Papaya	3 grams
Peach (fresh)	2 grams
Plums (2)	2 grams
Mango	2 grams
Nectarine	2 grams
Avocado (1/2 medium)	2 grams
Tomato (1 medium)	2 grams

Vegetables (cooked unless indicated)

Pinto, kidney, black, lima beans (1/2 cup)	4 to 7 grams
Sweet potato (1 medium)	4 grams
Lentils (1/2 cup)	4 grams
Jicama (1/2 raw)	3 to 4 grams
Baked potato with skin (medium)	3 grams
Corn (1/2 cup)	3 grams
Peas (1/2 cup)	3 grams
Broccoli (1/2 cup)	2 grams
Cabbage (1/2 cup)	2 grams
Spinach (1/2 cup)	2 grams
Cauliflower (3/4 cup)	2 grams
Carrots (1 medium raw or 1/2 cup cooked)	2 grams

Meat, poultry, fish, milk, milk products and fats such as oil, margarine and salad dressings do not normally have fiber, but it is important to include these in your child's diet to provide a complete balance of foods.



It is important to increase water in the diet when you increase fiber.

Sample menu for a 7 to 10 year old

<p>Breakfast</p> <p>1 cup instant oatmeal 1 slice whole grain toast 1 teaspoon margarine or butter 1 medium banana 8 ounces skim milk</p>	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Turkey sandwich on whole grain bread 1 teaspoon mustard 1 ounce whole grain chips 1 medium apple 8 baby carrots Bottled water</p> <p>Snack</p> <p>4 fig bar cookies 8 ounces skim milk</p>	<p>Dinner</p> <p>3 ounces pork tenderloin 1/2 cup mashed sweet potatoes 1/2 cup green beans 1 small whole grain roll 2 teaspoons margarine or butter 8 ounces skim milk</p> <p>Snack 2</p> <p>1/2 cup vanilla bean ice cream</p>
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Notes and questions



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Developed by Food and Nutrition Services.

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