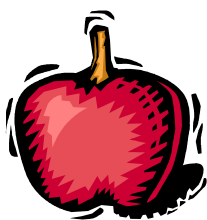


From the Broward County Extension Education Division Service Family and Consumer Sciences



Fiber in Your Diet



Fiber and Your Health

Fiber has varied uses in our bodies. Fiber adds bulk to our diet. Having enough bulk in the foods we eat helps prevent constipation. Fiber also may decrease our risk of getting diverticular disease. Diverticular disease is an intestinal problem that can cause discomfort and sometimes severe pain. It often is treated with a high fiber diet.

Fiber can help us fight high blood cholesterol. Certain kinds of fiber remove excess cholesterol from our bodies. This helps prevent heart disease in some people.

Eating foods that contain fiber is good for your health.

Tips for increasing dietary fiber in your diet:

- Two or more times each week serve bean, pea, lentil, or other vegetarian main dishes.
- Serve whole grain bread 100% whole wheat bread with dinner. (Go easy on the added fat, butter or margarine!)
- Eat a whole orange instead of drinking orange juice for breakfast more often.
- Have a fresh fruit for dessert instead of sweets.
- Grate fresh carrot into coleslaw and other salads (this also adds vitamin A).
- Add sliced banana, peaches, or other fresh fruit to your cereal.
- Keep prepared carrot and celery sticks, cucumber slices, and other fresh vegetables at work for a quick, high fiber (and low fat) snack.

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- Keep low fat whole wheat crackers at work for an easy high fiber snack.

Remember to Drink Water!

Be sure to drink at least six to eight glasses of fluid, especially water, each day. This will decrease side effects from the increased fiber in your diet.

Get into the habit of drinking a tall glass of water first thing in the morning. Enjoy water with your meals.

Ingredient Labeling

Food labels of most packaged foods include a list of ingredients. Ingredients are listed in order by weight. The item present in the greatest amount by weight is listed first and the item present in the least amount is last. Look for foods with high fiber ingredients listed first or second. Some high fiber ingredients are:

- Brown rice
- Bulgur
- Cracked wheat
- Legumes (dry beans, peas, lentils)
- Oatmeal or oat bran
- Rye bran
- Wheat bran
- Whole cornmeal
- Whole rye flour
- Whole wheat flour

All of these tips will help you include enough fiber in you diet for good health. Remember, to have an overall healthy diet, eat a variety of foods



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