

Source: Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Chelsey Amer (Photographer).



Source: Pixabay. Sindesign (Photographer).



Source: National Cancer Institute. Daniel Sone (Photographer).

EAT WELL, CARE WELL. TIPS TO INCREASE FIBER INTAKE

Many diet fads suggest that carbs are bad for you, but the truth is, they contain a lot of fiber which is essential to the body!

Unfortunately, many people do not get enough fiber in their diet, over 50, you need 21 to 30 grams a day. This can leave them bloated and can lead to other health consequences like heart disease & cancer.

Fortunately, it is easy to get fiber in your diet! Not only will it keep your digestive system regulated, but you will feel full longer as well! Fiber is found in whole grains, legumes, fruits, & vegetables, especially their skin, and seeds. When looking for whole grain items, look at the ingredient label! Make sure the first ingredient starts with "whole" otherwise you may be missing out on the extra fiber.

It is suggested to start the switch to using more whole grains slowly, only 1 or 2 switches a week, to make the adjustment easier. Fiber tends to bring water into the digestive tract. This may leave you feeling dehydrated and constipated. But if you consume the recommended amount of water, 8 glasses or more, you will be fine!

WEEKLY CHALLENGES

SWAP 2 REFINED GRAINS FOR WHOLE GRAINS

USE LENTILS AS YOUR PROTEIN SOURCE AT LEAST ONCE

ENJOY A PIECE OF FRUIT HIGH IN FIBER ONCE A DAY

TRY BAKED SWEET POTATOES WITH THE SKIN

DID YOU KNOW?

YOU CAN SWAP OUT FLOUR FOR BLACK BEANS IN RECIPES FOR AN EXTRA FIBER BOOST!

Tips to Increase Fiber Intake

Here are some practical, quick, easy ways to add fiber throughout the day. Remember, to be increase your water/fluid intake as you add fiber as it can act like a sponge; you need extra water to keep things moving. Fiber is only found in plant foods; it is the indigestible part of the food. Try to limit processed/refined foods, since they are lower in fiber, and try to eat foods in their whole or least processed form. For example, a whole apple has ~5 grams of fiber vs. ½ cup applesauce only has 1.4 grams and ½ cup of apple juice has no fiber.

Quick Bean Dip:

- 1 cup canned cannellini beans (or beans of your choice), rinsed and drained.
- 2 gloves garlic or 1 TSBP minced garlic
- 1 TBSP each, lemon juice and olive oil

Blend, season as you like and enjoy with whole wheat crackers or veggies.

Chili or Taco Pizza (this is a great way to use leftover meat)

- Premade whole wheat crust
- Pizza sauce, salsa or pureed beans for the base
- Kidney or beans of your choice, rinsed and drained (whole as a topping)
- Shredded cheese (of your choice)
- Cooked ground beef, turkey or chicken, flavored with taco or chili flavorings

Bake according to pizza crust directions. Top with lettuce, tomatoes or other veggies -enjoy.

More Tips:

- Add flaxseed, wheat germ, nuts or dried fruit to baked goods
- Use hummus as a sandwich or wrap spread instead of mayo. Add veggies and lettuce for even more fiber.
- Add high fiber cereal, berries, chia or flax seeds to Greek yogurt.
- Add nuts, seeds, veggies, beans, dried fruit to salads.
- Add cauliflower or carrots to potatoes when boiling and then mash together, season and enjoy!
- Snack on popcorn, 1.2 grams of fiber per cup.
- Add beans to salads, hot dishes, soups, pasta, eggs, baked goods. Have fun and be creative.