

# THE IMPORTANCE OF DIETARY FIBRE

*When you are looking at making improvements in the way you nourish your body, you would be forgiven if you found yourself focusing more so on how much protein you should be having. Although getting enough protein is important, I personally feel that fibre is perhaps a wee bit overlooked. Once you have the right amount of fibre and that digestive system is at optimum functioning levels, everything else slots into place.... increased energy, improved health, great skin, heathy body fat levels...need I go on?*

*Today we will look at this component and the objective is to steer you in the direction of this little beauty.... fibre, dietary fibre that is. So, let's go!*

## WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF FIBRE IN THE BODY?

*Dietary fibre is found in cereals, fruits and vegetables. Fibre is made up of the indigestible parts or compounds of plants, which pass relatively unchanged through our stomach and intestines. Fibre is mainly a carbohydrate. The main role of fibre is to keep the digestive system healthy.*

## WHAT DOES FIBRE DO IN THE BODY?

*Soluble fibre dissolves in the water in your digestive system. It may help to reduce the amount of cholesterol in your blood. If you have constipation, gradually increasing sources of soluble fibre – such as fruit and vegetables, oats can help soften your stools and make them easier to pass. Other good sources of soluble fibre include beans, lentils, oatmeal, peas, citrus fruits, blueberries, apples and barley. Good sources of insoluble fibre include foods with whole-wheat flour, wheat bran, brown rice, cauliflower, potatoes, tomatoes and cucumbers.*

*OK that is all fine and well, how do I get this into me then, Martine? I hear you ask ..... Read on, we've got this!*

## 10 EASY WAYS TO HELP YOU INCREASE YOUR FIBRE INTAKE WHILE ADDING FLAVOUR AND VARIETY TO YOUR FOOD.

### CHOOSE A WIDE VARIETY OF FIBRE SOURCES

Plant foods provide two types of fibre, as mentioned above: soluble fiber (which increases the feeling of fullness) and insoluble fiber (which aids the digestive system and promotes regular evacuation). Peas, beans, oats, and fruits are sources of soluble fibre, and whole grains and vegetables provide the majority of insoluble fibre. Some foods provide both!.

### PICK WHOLE GRAIN FOODS OVER REFINED CARBOHYDRATES

Whole grain foods are a natural source of dietary fibre. Unlike refined carbohydrates (think white bread), whole grains retain the kernel's fiber-rich outer shell, known as bran. To identify whole grains, look for these ingredients on labels: whole wheat, barley, oats, rye, brown rice, buckwheat, millet, oatmeal, and bulgur. When looking for fibre-rich whole grains, not all whole grains are made the same. Take some time to do your homework on what is best for you.

## **BEGIN YOUR DAY WITH A FIBRE BOOST**

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## **BEGIN YOUR DAY WITH A FIBRE BOOST**

You've probably heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, but starting your day with the right kind of fuel is equally if not more important. Choose a breakfast that is high in fibre. Don't be fooled by fancy packaging and advertising. It can be as simple as adding in fruit or veges to what you are already doing.

## **PICK HIGH-FIBRE SNACKS WHEN THE AFTERNOON SLUMP OR MUNCHIES HIT**

Avoid high-calorie, high-fat and low-fiber vending machine options by packing fibre-rich snacks. Perfect answer to an afternoon slump can be a homemade trail mix or mixed nuts, and dried figs or apricots. Popcorn-a whole grain-is another high-fiber snack.

## **ADD FRESH FRUIT TO EVERY MEAL**

Whether added to cereal, eaten as a snack, or enjoyed as a simple dessert with some Greek yoghurt, fresh fruit is a sweet way to add fibre and other nutrients to your diet. The fruits highest in fibre include apples, berries, prunes, pears and oranges. Kiwi fruit has both types of fibre . Fun fact: Raspberries have 8gms of fibre per cup!

## **LOAD UP ON LEGUMES**

High-fibre legumes like beans, peas, and lentils - are among the best sources of fiber. Increase your fibre servings to your day by popping legumes into salads, soups, and casseroles, or puree them to make a delicious dip.

## **EXPLORE THE GLOBE**

Western food tends to be lower in fibre than other ethnic cuisines. Take your taste buds on a world excursion and add fibre to your nutrition by dining on Mexican, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean recipes. Tasty options include black bean burritos, hummus, tabbouleh, bean salads, and whole wheat couscous.

## **TAKE CONTROL: BAKE YOUR OWN HIGH-FIBER GOODIES**

Pump up the fiber content of your own baked goods by using whole wheat flour in place of all-purpose white flour, adding oatmeal to cookies, or loading homemade muffins with raisins, berries, or bananas.

## TAKE IT SLOW

Most people eat far less than the recommended 25 to 38 grams of fibre per day. Making rapid changes to your fibre intake may not feel that comfortable. Increase fibre gradually to prevent excess gas and bloating, and a little potential embarrassment.... and to allow your gastrointestinal tract time to adjust.

## REMEMBER TO HYDRATE

As you increase your fibre intake, increase your fluids as well. Fibre pulls water into the intestines. Without adequate hydration, fibre can aggravate rather than alleviate constipation. So try to drink at least eight glasses of water a day. With a little creativity, some pre-planning, and a few new additions to your grocery list, you'll be well on your way to meeting your daily fibre requirements. Just be sure not to overwhelm yourself with too many changes at once. Pick one or two ideas to try each week and stick with those that work best for you and your family.

*Now you have some knowledge or you are reminded of what you already knew, what will you so with it. Knowledge is power, right? Knowledge is power ONLY when applied. I have so much tips and tricks that flow on from this that I use when coaching my clients. If you would like to amp up your results in the way of health and fitness then contact me and let's explore the possibilities of working together.*

YOURS IN WELLNESS



*Martine Carroll*

**RESULTS HEALTH COACH & PERSONAL TRAINER  
HELPING PEOPLE ACHIEVE HEALTH & VITALITY.**



**NOT GETTING THE RESULTS YOU'RE AFTER? I CAN HELP! ☺**

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