



## Nutrition Education



### HOW MUCH FIBER SHOULD YOU EAT?

As we age, fiber requirements decrease. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, for those over the age of 70, the recommendation for women is 21 grams and for men 30 grams of total fiber per day.



When adding fiber to your diet, be sure to drink adequate fluids to prevent constipation. A glass of water with meals and snacks will ensure you get sufficient water to stay hydrated and keep things moving.

#### Sources:

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/14400-improving-your-health-with-fiber>

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## FIBER: WHY WE NEED IT

Fiber is the structural part of plant foods--such as fruits, vegetables, and grains--that our bodies cannot digest or break down. There are two kinds of fiber: soluble and insoluble.

**Soluble fiber:** dissolves in water to form a gummy gel. It can slow down the passage of food from the stomach to the intestine. Examples include dried beans, oats, barley, bananas, potatoes, and soft parts of apples and pears.

**Insoluble fiber:** often referred to as "roughage" because it does not dissolve in water. It holds onto water, which helps produce softer, bulkier stools to help regulate bowel movements. Examples include whole bran, whole grain products, nuts, corn, carrots, grapes, berries, and peels of apples and pears.



### What other things does fiber do?

Research has shown that a diet rich in fiber is associated with many health benefits, including the following:

1. **Lowers cholesterol:** Soluble fiber has been shown to lower cholesterol and may help reduce the risk of heart disease.
2. **Better regulates blood sugar levels:** A high-fiber meal slows down the digestion of food into the intestines, which may help to keep blood sugars from rising rapidly.
3. **Weight control:** A high-fiber diet may help keep you fuller longer, which prevents overeating and hunger between meals.
4. **May prevent intestinal cancer:** Insoluble fiber increases the bulk and speed of food moving through the intestinal tract, which reduces time for harmful substances to build up.
5. **Constipation:** Constipation can often be relieved by increasing the fiber or roughage in your diet. Fiber works to help regulate bowel movements by pulling water into the colon to produce softer, bulkier stools. This action helps to promote better regularity.