

SAMPLE MENU

BREAKFAST

- 1 **banana**
- 1 cup **Shredded Wheat cereal**
- 1 cup fat free milk
- 1 slice **whole wheat toast**
- 1 teaspoon margarine
- Water or other fluid

LUNCH

- 3 ounces of turkey
- 2 slices of **whole wheat bread**
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 raw **carrot**
- 1 **apple**
- Water or other fluid

DINNER

- Tossed salad with romaine, tomato, cucumber, carrots**
- 2 tablespoons salad dressing
- 3 ounces grilled halibut
- 1/2 cup **brown rice**
- 1/2 cup steamed **broccoli**
- 1 **whole wheat roll**
- 2 teaspoons margarine
- Large bunch of **grapes**
- Water or other fluid

SNACK

- 1 cup frozen yogurt with sliced **strawberries**
- Water or other fluid

TOTALS

1900 calories, 35 grams of fiber, 54 grams of fat, 24 percent calories from fat

FIBER CONTENT IN FOODS*

	Grams		Grams
BEANS AND PEAS		GRAINS	
(serving is 1 cup of cooked beans)		Whole wheat pasta (1 cup)	6
Navy beans	19	Brown rice (1 cup)	4
Kidney beans	17	FRUITS	
Lentils	16	Pear (1 large)	7
Split peas	16	Apple (1 large)	5
Pinto beans	15	Prunes, dried (6)	4
Chickpeas (Garbanzos)	13	Orange (1 large)	4
Black-eyed peas	11	Banana (1 large)	4
CEREALS		Apricots, dried (10)	3
General Mills Fiber One® (½ cup)	14	Peach (1 large)	3
Wheat Bran (½ cup)	12	Figs, dried (3)	2
Kellogg's® All Bran® (½ cup)	10	Strawberries (½ cup)	2
Nabisco/Post® 100% Bran (1/3 cup)	8	Raisins (¼ cup)	2
Nabisco/Post® Shredded Wheat 'N Bran (1¼ cup)	8	Grapes (1 cup)	2
Post® Raisin Bran (1 cup)	7	Cantaloupe (1 cup)	2
Kellogg's® Raisin Bran (1 cup)	7	Grapefruit (½ large)	2
General Mills® Multi-Bran Chex® (¾ cup)	6	VEGETABLES	
Quaker® Oat Bran, hot cereal (½ cup)	6	Baked potato with skin (1 medium)	4
Kellogg's® Bitesize Mini-Wheats (1 cup)	6	Sweet potato without skin (1 medium)	4
Kellogg's® Complete® Bran Flakes (¾ cup)	5	Broccoli, cooked (½ cup)	3
Nabisco/Post® Frosted Bitesize Mini-Wheats (1 cup)	5	Peas, cooked (½ cup)	3
Nabisco/Post® Shredded Wheat (1 cup)	5	Corn, cooked (½ cup)	3
General Mills® Whole Grain Wheat Chex® (¾ cup)	5	Winter squash, cooked (½ cup)	3
Quaker® Oatmeal (½ cup)	4	Carrot, raw (1 large)	2
General Mills Total® or Wheaties® (1 cup)	3	Brussels sprouts, cooked (½ cup)	2
Wheatena® (½ cup)	3	Cauliflower, cooked (½ cup)	1
BREADS		Spinach, raw (1 cup)	1
English muffin, whole wheat (½)	2	Tomato (½ large)	1
Pita, whole wheat (½)	2	Green pepper, raw (½ large)	1
Roll, whole wheat (½)	2	NUTS & SEEDS	
Whole wheat bread (1 slice)	2	Almonds (¼ cup)	4
Tortilla, corn (6")	2	Pistachios (¼ cup)	3
Tortilla, whole wheat (8")	2	Peanuts (¼ cup)	3
		Tahini (2 tablespoons)	3
		Sunflower seed kernels (¼ cup)	3

*Fiber content data from product Nutrition Facts labels and from the USDA National Nutrient Database at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search>.

Brand names are used for illustration purposes only and do not constitute an endorsement by Cooperative Extension.

Prepared by: Mary Wilson, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Specialist, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension: Reno 775/784-4848, Las Vegas 702/222-3130. For information on other topics, visit our website at www.unce.unr.edu

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AN APPLE A DAY

FIGURING OUT FIBER



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University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

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What is fiber?

Fiber is the structural part of plant foods that is not broken down by the digestive system and therefore does not provide energy to the body. Fiber includes stems, leaves, seeds, and plant secretions. It is an excellent natural laxative as it provides bulk and absorbs water, making the stool soft and easy to eliminate.

What particular plant foods provide dietary fiber?

Fiber-rich foods include fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and grains. You can get a good supply of fiber from fruits such as apples and oranges; vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, and corn; legumes such as pinto beans and lentils; nuts such as peanuts and almonds; and whole grain products such as breads, cereals and brown rice. Much of the fiber in fruits and vegetables is in the skin.

Are there different types of fiber?

Yes. There are two types - soluble and insoluble.

Soluble fiber is found mainly in fruits and vegetables. It is also present in oat bran, barley and legumes. Soluble fiber dissolves in water and passes through the digestive system more slowly than insoluble fiber. Soluble fiber, along with a low fat diet, may help lower blood cholesterol levels in some people. It may also help keep glucose levels in balance.

Insoluble fiber consists mostly of compounds that make up the structure of plant cells and bran layers of cereal grains. Insoluble fiber does not dissolve in water. It provides bulk and passes through the digestive system quickly. It

stimulates the movement of the intestinal muscles, which helps maintain regularity. Insoluble fiber is found primarily in whole grain breads and cereals, the edible skins of fruits such as apples and pears, root and leafy vegetables.

How much fiber do I need each day?

The Adequate Intake (AI) for fiber for men age 19-50 is 38 grams/day and for men 51 and over, the AI is 30 grams/day. The AI for women ages 19-50 is 25 grams/day and for women 51 and over, the AI is 21 grams/day. It is estimated that the average American consumes only 11 - 13 grams of fiber a day. Consuming too little fiber can lead to digestive problems such as constipation, hemorrhoids, diverticular disease, and possibly colon cancer. Consuming a variety of foods will provide adequate amounts of both soluble and insoluble fiber.

Can eating too much fiber be harmful?

Extremely high amounts of fiber may interfere with the absorption of calcium, zinc, iron, and magnesium due to fiber's binding characteristic. This may be a problem for those who add high amounts of wheat bran to foods or take fiber supplements (examples include Metamucil[®], Fiberall[®], Citrucel[®], and Senokot[®]). Research suggests that consuming more than 50 grams of fiber per day is not beneficial.

Does increasing fiber in the diet help relieve constipation?

Yes. Both soluble and insoluble fibers help to increase bulk and water absorption in the bowel. The result is an increase in the frequency and ease of bowel movements. As you increase fiber in your diet, it's essential to also drink at least six to eight glasses of water each day. Establishing good health habits including regular meals, adequate dietary fiber, regular time for elimination, rest, relaxation, adequate intake of fluids, and exercise help to relieve constipation.

Can eating more fiber help prevent diverticulosis?

It can. Diverticulosis is a condition in which tiny pouches form within the wall of the bowel. A diet high in fiber, especially insoluble, may help prevent inflammation or relieve this painful condition by reducing constipation and strained bowel movements, thus reducing pressure in the colon. When the pouches trap food, they become painfully inflamed. This is called diverticulitis. When this happens, a low fiber diet is recommended until the intestine heals.

Does increasing fiber in the diet help irritable bowel syndrome?

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is also known as spastic colon, and nervous bowel. No one is sure exactly what causes IBS - some experts attribute it to emotional stress or food intolerance or an unknown physiological disorder. Studies have found varying degrees of improvement in the condition with increased fiber intake.

INCREASING YOUR FIBER INTAKE

Increase your fiber intake gradually. Each week, increase your daily intake by no more than 5 grams. Make these moderate increases until your total fiber intake reaches 20 to 35 grams per day. Adding too much too quickly can cause painful bloating, diarrhea, and excess gas.



Eat more whole grain foods like whole wheat bread and brown rice. Look for the word **WHOLE** as the first ingredient in breads, cereals, and crackers. Eat at least three servings of whole grains each day.



Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Eat the skins of fruits and potatoes.



Eat more legumes such as pinto, lima, navy, white and kidney beans as well as green and yellow peas and lentils.



In recipes, substitute whole wheat flour for at least half the amount of wheat flour.



Drink plenty of water, at least 6 to 8 glasses per day, to help move the fiber through your system.

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