



The Surgical Institute
at True North

CHE MILLER MD | KAYLA WATKINS-JONES MD
BRETT LOCKE APRN

High Fiber Diet

High Fiber Diet Overview

Eating a diet that is high in fiber has many potential health benefits, including a decreased risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes. High fiber is a commonly recommended treatment for digestive problems: constipation, diarrhea, hemorrhoids, and diverticulosis. Fiber is normally found in beans, grains, vegetables, and fruits. However, most people do not eat as much fiber as is recommended.

What is Fiber?

Dietary fiber is a non-digested and non-absorbed plant based substance within the intestine where it modulates digestion of other foods and affects the consistency of stool.

Benefits of a High Fiber Diet

Insoluble fiber (wheat bran, and some fruits and vegetables) has been recommended to treat digestive problems such as constipation hemorrhoids, chronic diarrhea, and fecal inconsistency. Fiber bulks the stool, making it softer and easier to pass. Fiber helps the stool pass regularly, although it is not a laxative. Soluble fiber (psyllium, pectin, wheat dextrin, and oat products) can reduce the risk of coronary artery disease and stroke by 40 to 50 percent (compared to a low fiber diet).

Soluble fiber can also reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. In people who have diabetes (type 1 and 2), soluble fiber can help to control blood glucose levels.

Dietary sources of fiber

Fruits, beans, vegetables, breakfast cereals, wheats, and grains.

Other sources of fiber - Unprocessed wheat bran and fiber supplements. Examples include psyllium, methylcellulose, wheat dextrin, and calcium polycarbophil.

Fiber Side Effects

Adding fiber to a diet can have some side effects, such as abdominal bloating or gas. This can sometimes be minimized by starting with a small amount and slowly increasing until stools become softer and more frequent.

How much fiber do I need?

The recommended amount of dietary fiber is 25 grams (for women) to 38 grams (for men) of fiber per day. By reading the nutrition label on the packaged foods, it is possible to determine the number of grams of dietary fiber per serving.