How Much Fiber Do You Need?

The National Institutes of Health recommends 20 to 35 grams of fiber daily for older children, adolescents and adults. The Mayo Clinic has the following recommendations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Fiber recommendation (grams per day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men, age 50 and younger</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men, age 51 and older</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women, age 50 and younger</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women, age 51 and older</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mayo Clinic; www.mayoclinic.com/health/fiber/NU00033/NSECTIONGROUP=2

True or false (T or F)?

- Dietary fiber is found in plant foods (fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes).
- Getting your fiber from whole fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes also provides many important nutrients for your health.
- You get less fiber from orange juice than from an orange. In general, less processing equals more fiber.
- Soluble fiber is best for lowering blood cholesterol. Insoluble fiber helps the intestine function well. So eating a variety of fiber-rich foods is best.

The answers: All are true statements!

Simple Swaps to Perk Up the Fiber in Your Diet

Higher-fiber choice:
- White bread ................. Whole-grain bread
- Instant or white rice ....... Brown rice
- Canned fruit or juice ...... Fresh fruit with skins
- Potato chips ................ Popcorn
- Chocolate chips ............ Raisins
- Cream of tomato soup ... Lentil or split pea soup
- Low-fiber cereal .......... Bran cereal
- Sugar cookies ............. Oatmeal raisin cookies
- White flour ............... Whole-wheat flour

Remember to increase your fiber intake slowly, and drink plenty of water to avoid digestive upset.

NDSU Extension Service
North Dakota State University
Reviewed November 2017
Your Fiber-food Hit Parade

To learn more about your food choices, compare Nutrition Facts labels on packaged foods. The food label can state that a product is “a good source” of fiber if the food has 2.5 grams to 4.9 grams of fiber per serving. The package can claim “high in,” “rich in” or “excellent source of” fiber if the food provides 5 grams per serving.

⭐⭐⭐ Fruits ⭐⭐⭐
(2 grams or more fiber per serving, about ½ cup)
- Apple w/skin
- Blueberries
- Banana
- Prunes
- Strawberries
- Orange
- Pear
- Raspberries
- Raisins

⭐⭐⭐ Vegetables ⭐⭐⭐
(2 grams or more fiber per serving, about ½ cup cooked)
- Broccoli
- Peas
- Carrots
- Brussel sprouts
- Corn
- Potato with skin
- Spinach

⭐⭐⭐ Grains ⭐⭐⭐
(1 gram or more fiber per serving, about 1 ounce)
- Whole Wheat
- Rye
- Pumpernickel
- Cracked wheat
- Bran muffins
- Brown rice
- Whole-wheat pasta

Breakfast cereals vary in their fiber content. Read the Nutrition Facts labels to compare your choices. Whole-grain cereals usually are higher in fiber.

⭐⭐⭐ Legumes ⭐⭐⭐
(4 grams or more fiber per serving, about ½ cup)
- Lentils
- Pinto beans
- Kidney beans
- Dried peas
- Lima beans
- Navy beans
- Baked beans
- Peanuts

Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., L.R.D., Food and Nutrition Specialist

Materials were partially funded by the USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Source: Content adapted from “Harvest Health at Home: Eating for the Second 50 Years,” North Dakota State University Extension Service; authored by Karen Heller, Susan J. Crockett and Joyce Merkel.

The NDSU Extension Service does not endorse commercial products or companies even though reference may be made to tradenames, trademarks or service names. NDSU encourages you to use and share this content, but please do so under the conditions of our Creative Commons license. You may copy, distribute, transmit and adapt this work as long as you give full attribution, don’t use the work for commercial purposes and share your resulting work similarly. For more information, visit www.ag.ndsu.edu/agcomm/creative-commons.

For more information on this and other topics, see www.ag.ndsu.edu/food

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. North Dakota State University does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or status as a U.S. veteran. Direct inquiries to the Vice President for Equity, Diversity and Global Outreach, 205 Old Main, (701) 231-7708.

This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, (701) 231-7881.