



## Fibre and Your Health

### Why is fibre important?

Dietary fibre is important for your health. However, most Canadians do not get enough fibre. Dietary fibre helps your bowel stay healthy and regular. It can also lower blood cholesterol levels and control blood sugar levels. Dietary fibre may also help prevent colon cancer. Eating foods that contain more fibre may help you feel full for a longer time, which can help you to control your weight.

### How much fibre do I need?

On average, you can aim for the following amount of fibre each day, depending on your age and gender:

Age (years)	Gender	Fibre (grams)
1-3	Male	19
	Female	
4-8	Male	25
	Female	
9-13	Male	31
	Female	26
14-18	Male	38
	Female	26
19-50	Male	38
	Female	25
51-70+	Male	30
	Female	21
Pregnancy	Female	28
Lactation	Female	29

You are probably getting enough fibre if you are using Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide to plan your meals and snacks plus choosing high fibre foods every day.

People with intestinal or bowel diseases may not be able to eat large amounts of fibre. Speak with your doctor or dietitian.

### Increase the amount of fibre you eat

Every day, choose high fibre foods for meals and snacks:

- Start the day with a cereal that is a high\* or very high\* source of fibre.
- Adults need 7 to 10 servings of vegetables and fruit each day. A serving is 125 mL or 1/2 cup of fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables or fruit, which are higher in fibre than juice.

- Eat 100% whole grain breads, brown rice and whole wheat pasta
- Add lentils or cooked beans to your soup, casserole, or salad
- Add dried fruits, nuts or seeds to yogurt, muffins, or salads
- When you start to eat more fibre, be sure to drink more fluid as well.
- Add fibre to your diet slowly to reduce gas and cramping

### Tips for Reading Food Labels

- Look for labels that say high or very high source of fibre, which mean the food has at least 4 to 6 grams of fibre per serving
- Check the Nutrition Facts table on the package for the amount or grams of fibre in a serving
- Check the ingredient list
  - Look for ingredients such as bran, whole grain wheat, oatmeal, or rye flour
  - Enriched wheat flour and unbleached flour are both refined white flour, and these are not good sources of fibre
  - Multigrain may mean that a small amount of whole grain has been added to enriched flour, and this does not necessarily make the food product a good source of fibre.

**For more nutrition information, call 8-1-1 to speak with a registered dietitian.**

For more HealthLink BC File topics, visit [www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles/index.stm](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles/index.stm) or your local public health unit.

Click on [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca) or call **8-1-1** for non-emergency health information and services in B.C.

For deaf and hearing-impaired assistance, call 7-1-1 in B.C.

Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.

<b>Food</b>	<b>Portion</b>	<b>Fibre amount (grams)</b>
All bran cereals (e.g. Bran Buds™)	30g or 125 mL/½ cup or 75 mL/1/3 cup	10-13
Almonds, roasted	60ml or ¼ cup	4
Apple with skin	1 medium	3
Banana	1 medium	2
Black beans, cooked or canned baked beans	175ml or ¾ cup	9-10
Blackberries or raspberries	125ml or ½ cup	4
Bran, 100% natural wheat bran	30ml or 2 Tbsp	3
Bran flakes	30g	4*
Bread, sprouted grain	35g or 1 slice	3-5*
Brussels sprouts	4 sprouts	3
Corn, carrot, or broccoli, cooked	125ml or ½ cup	2
Dates, dried	3 dates	2
Edamame/green soy beans, cooked and shelled	175ml or ¾ cup	6
Flax seeds, ground	15ml or 1 Tbsp	3
Garbanzo beans (chickpeas), cooked	175ml or ¾ cup	6
Green peas, cooked	125ml or ½ cup	6
Hummus	175ml or ¾ cup	7-11
Kidney beans, dark red, cooked	175ml or ¾ cup	9
Kiwi fruit	1 large	3
Lentils, cooked	175ml or ¾ cup	6
Mango	1 fruit	4
Oatmeal (large oats), prepared	175ml or ¾ cup	2-3*
Peanut butter, chunk type	30ml or 2 Tbsp	3
Peanuts, dry, roasted	60ml or ¼ cup	3
Pear, canned halves, stewed rhubarb	125ml or ½ cup	3
Pear, with skin	1 medium	5
Popcorn, popped	500 mL/2 cups	2.4
POST Raisin Bran, POST Spoon Size Shredded Wheat	30g	4*
POST Shreddies or Kellogg's Raisin Bran®	30g	3*
Potato, with or without skin	1 medium	3-4
Quaker® Oat Bran, prepared	175ml or ¾ cup	3*
Red River cereal, prepared	175ml or ¾ cup	4*
Soy nuts, roasted	175ml or ¾ cup	15
Split peas, cooked	175ml or ¾ cup	4
Mixed vegetables or parsnips, cooked	125ml or ½ cup	3
Sunflower seed kernels, dried, hulled	60ml or ¼ cup	4
Whole wheat bread, commercial	35g or 1 slice	2*
Whole wheat spaghetti, cooked	125ml or ½ cup	2*

\*Check the label