



Senior Friendly™ Ideas for Healthy Eating

#3



Planning Meals: Fibre Facts

Fibre is found in foods such as vegetables, fruit, whole grain breads and cereals, nuts, seeds and legumes (dried peas, beans, soy and lentils).

A diet high in fibre, along with exercise and healthy eating, can help you maintain normal bowel habits. Fibre helps prevent constipation by adding bulk and absorbing water, thus softening the stool. High fibre diets may also help prevent and treat a variety of diseases and conditions, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity. A healthy diet for seniors should include 20-30 grams of fibre per day.

Use Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide to help you choose foods that are higher in fibre. Small changes can add up to a big difference in your fibre intake. You can get a copy of the guide by calling 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232) or by visiting www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide.

Best sources of fibre:

Vegetables and Fruit

- Fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables, especially those with edible seeds or skins, e.g. potatoes with skin, broccoli, corn, peas, raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, pears, apples, prunes, dates, figs, dried apricots or raisins.

Grain products

- Whole grain breads, e.g. 100 per cent whole wheat, cracked wheat, multigrain or dark rye bread.
- Whole grain cereals, e.g. oatmeal, cracked wheat, shredded wheat, oat bran, granola, or any cereal containing bran.
- Whole grain crackers, muffins and cookies, e.g. whole wheat, rye or graham crackers, bran muffins, cornmeal muffins, oatmeal cookies, date squares.
- Brown or wild rice, barley, bulgur, wheat germ, whole grain wheat, buckwheat, millet.
- Whole grain pasta, such as spaghetti or macaroni.



Milk and Alternatives

- While dairy products are not a natural source of fibre, some milks and yogurts contain added fibre. Read the label to check out the amount of fibre.



Meat and Alternatives

- Cooked dried peas, beans and lentils, e.g. kidney beans, soybeans, black beans, chick peas, yellow or split peas.
- Nuts and seeds, e.g. almonds, cashews, flax.
- Peanuts and peanut butter.

High fibre menu ideas

Breakfast

- High fibre cereals such as bran cereals, shredded wheat, cooked oatmeal, etc. or a scoop of high fibre cereal mixed with one of your favourites. Also look for cereals with psyllium fibre.
- Cereals topped with raisins, flax seeds, sliced banana or a handful of frozen or fresh blueberries.
- Whole wheat toast with peanut butter.
- Whole fruit instead of juice.
- Stewed prunes.
- Pancakes made with whole wheat flour and added flax seed.

Lunch

- Soups made with dried peas, beans, lentils or barley (e.g. split pea, minestrone).
- Sandwiches made with whole wheat, multigrain or dark rye bread.
- Green salad sprinkled with sunflower seeds, almonds or additional fruits or vegetables such as shredded carrot, sliced cucumber, oranges or strawberries.



- Marinated bean, spinach or carrot and raisin salad.
- Muffins made with whole wheat flour and added raisins, figs or dates.

Supper

- Baked beans or chili.
- Casseroles with added beans, lentils, barley and vegetables and a handful of raw bran.
- Baked potato in skin, or brown or wild rice.
- Meat loaf or meatballs with added raw bran.

Tips for Staying Regular

- Eat regular meals and snacks.
- To minimize stomach bloating and gas, increase your fibre gradually. Your body will adapt to a higher fibre diet and any bloating or gas that you experience will disappear.
- Drink at least eight glasses of fluids each day. Fluids include water, juice, milk, soup, herbal teas, decaffeinated coffee or tea.
- Exercise regularly. Even a short, daily walk is a good idea.
- Avoid laxatives unless your doctor has prescribed them. Laxative overdose may cause a lazy bowel that worsens constipation.

Adapted from Calgary Regional Health Authority, Mistahia Health Region, Edmonton Board of Health.

For more nutrition information contact your local health unit, health centre or hospital.

Or visit www.dietitians.ca

Dietitians provide food and nutrition information you can trust. Find a dietitian in your area at www.dietitians.ca/find or call 1-888-901-7776.



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