

The Benefits of Soluble and Insoluble Fiber in Your Child's Diet

What is Fiber:

Fiber comes from plant foods. The body cannot break down the fiber but passes it through the digestive system. There are two types of fibers—soluble and insoluble—each keeping our digestive system healthy and may prevent diseases. Most high-fiber foods have a combination of both soluble and insoluble fiber.

Fiber does not contain calories.

(Source: <http://www.everydayhealth.com/health-report/guide-to-daily-fiber/soluble-insoluble-fiber.aspx>)



Soluble Fiber	Insoluble Fiber
<p>General information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found inside the cells of the plant's cell wall. • Dissolves in water to form a gel-like material that slows down absorption of food components in the stomach. <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps digestive system healthy by softening stool for ease in elimination, • May help decrease cholesterol levels by absorbing/binding to fat • May help prevent diabetes by absorbing the blood sugar • May help with cardiovascular health, • Weight control since causes one to feel "full", decreasing overeating <p>Sources: Oat bran, barley, legumes, and some fruits and vegetables (apples, oranges, pears, carrots, celery cucumbers, and etc.)</p>	<p>General information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes up the cell wall of the plant. • Does not dissolve in water but bulks up. <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps digestive system healthy by "keeping us regular" as it softens stool and moves it through the colon quickly by increasing the bulk of the stool, • Reduces risk of diverticulosis and irritable bowel syndrome • May reduce the risk of colon and breast cancer when part of a low-fat diet, • Weight control since causes one to feel "full", decreasing overeating <p>Sources: Wheat, oat bran, corn, nuts, whole grains, seeds, bulgur, couscous, brown rice, skin and peels of fruits and vegetables, zucchini, dark leafy greens, and etc.</p>

Adding fiber to your child's daily diet:

Remember that fiber is found in fruits, vegetables and whole grains and "a high-fiber food has 5 grams or more of fiber per serving and a good source of fiber is one that provides 2.5 to 4.9 grams per serving."

(Source: <http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/fiber.html>)

Use the following guidelines for your child's target range, and each day gradually increase fiber-rich foods to your child's daily diet. Make sure your child drinks plenty of water. By slowly increasing your child's intake of high-fiber food each day and adding water, you will minimize any discomfort such as constipation or bloating.

How much for children:

"Toddlers age 1-3 years should get 19 grams of fiber each day and children 4-8 years should get 25 grams of fiber a day. Older boys age 9-13 years should get 31 grams and teen boys age 14-18 years should get 38 grams per day. Older girls and teens should get 26 grams of fiber a day."

(Source: <http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/fiber.html>)

Sources of fiber-rich foods:

Read the Food Labels for Fiber contents when available!

- whole grain foods found in pastas, cereals (watch out for the sugar!), crackers and breads; bran meal, high-bran "health" bread, dark rye, pumpernickel, oats, quinoa, and whole wheat,
- beans such as lentils, kidney, garbanzo, black, and baked beans,
- fruits such as apples (best if the apple is not peeled), blackberries, blueberry, cranberry, dried figs, pears (best if the pear is not peeled), prunes, pumpkin and raspberry,
- vegetables such as artichokes, black-eyed peas, broccoli, green peas, kale, spinach, and sweet potato,
- nuts such as almonds

Great source of ideas to add fiber to your child's diet:

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/fiber.html#>

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/photogallery/fiber-rich-foods.aspx>



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