

FAST FACTS

Fibre

For more than a healthy gut

We have probably all heard fibre keeps us regular, but did you know it also provides a host of other health benefits and is crucial for both short term and long term health?

Dietary fibre is the roughage or bulk parts of food that our body does not absorb. It comes from plant foods, including fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds and grains.

It's usually described as "soluble" or "insoluble", based on its ability to dissolve in water. For example, the inner portion of an apple contains soluble fibre, whereas the peel is made of insoluble fibre.

Soluble fibre contributes to a feeling of fullness and helps maintain a healthy weight. It also decreases the absorption of dietary sugars and fats, thereby helping to manage blood sugar and blood fat levels. Soluble fibre serves as a food source for the beneficial bacteria that inhabit the digestive tract.

The insoluble fibre in plant foods is helpful in moving waste products through the digestive tract. It also provides bulk to the stool and is beneficial in preventing constipation, haemorrhoids, and diverticuli.

What about resistant starch?

Resistant starch acts in a similar way to fibre. It is not digested in the small intestine and instead proceeds to the large intestine where it can assist in the production of good bacteria to support bowel health.

Resistant starch is found in undercooked pasta, under ripe bananas, cooked then cooled potato and rice.

Benefits of fibre and resistant starch

- helps you feel fuller for longer
- supports microbiome diversity and health
- supports detoxification
- can improve cholesterol and blood sugar levels
- can reduce your risk of diseases, including bowel cancer



How much?

Nutrition Australia recommend a minimum:
 Female adults eat 25g per day
 Male adults eat 30g per day

Fibre in food

- 1 cup wholemeal pasta: 7.9g fibre
- 1 cup unpeeled carrot: 6.9g fibre
- 100g kidney beans: 6.5g fibre
- 1 cob corn: 5.9g fibre
- 1/2 cup rolled oats: 4.5g fibre
- 1 cup broccoli: 3.8g fibre
- 100g lentils: 3.7g fibre
- 25 almonds: 3.0g fibre
- 1 apple unpeeled: 2.2g fibre
- 1 tbs psyllium husk: 2.2g fibre
- 1 cup airpopped corn: 1.2g fibre

Eating a variety of plant foods will help you get enough fibre each day. Be sure to increase your fibre intake slowly - adding too much too quickly can promote intestinal gas, abdominal bloating and cramping. By doing this gradually over a few weeks it allows the natural bacteria in your digestive system to adjust to the positive change.