



Patient & Family Guide

2024

# Tips for High-fibre Eating

Aussi disponible en français : FF85-2064



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Tips for High-fibre Eating

## What is fibre?

- Fibre is the part of a plant that your body cannot digest (break down). It is found in:
  - › Whole grain breads and cereals
  - › Fruits
  - › Vegetables
  - › Legumes
  - › Pulses (dried beans, lentils, and chickpeas)
  - › Nuts
  - › Seeds
- Getting enough fibre is important for regular bowel movements (pooping) and can help with other health conditions.

## There are 2 types of fibre: soluble and insoluble.

- Soluble fibre can help you:
  - › Lower your cholesterol
  - › Control your blood sugar levels
  - › Thicken your stools (poop)
- Insoluble fibre can:
  - › Help you control constipation (not being able to poop)
  - › Help you feel full longer

Foods usually have both types of fibre.

## **Soluble fibre**

- Soluble fibre is in foods like:
  - › Oats, oat bran, barley, and rye
  - › Ground flax seeds
  - › All-Bran Buds®
  - › Pulses
  - › Vegetables (like avocados, broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, green beans, green peas, and squash)
  - › Fruits (without the skin)
  - › Powdered fibre supplements (like Metamucil®, Benefiber®)

## **Insoluble fibre**

- Insoluble fibre is in foods like:
  - › Brown rice
  - › Celery and corn
  - › Fruit skins
  - › Raw vegetables
  - › Nuts and seeds
  - › Popcorn
  - › Potato skins
  - › Wheat, rye, barley
  - › Wheat bran, corn bran
  - › Whole or ground flax seeds

## **Tips for high-fibre eating**

- Eat more fibre slowly, over time.
- Drink 6 to 8 glasses (1.5 to 2 L) of caffeine-free drinks a day.
- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables as recommended in Canada's Food Guide.
- Learn more about fibre and nutrition, and read Canada's Food Guide:
  - › <http://food-guide.canada.ca>
- Choose whole grain, whole wheat, and bran products more often.
- Eat more pulses.
- Read food labels to choose foods with more fibre.
- To learn how to choose foods higher in fibre and how to read a food label, see pamphlet 1887, *Heart Healthy Eating Guide*:
  - › [www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/1887](http://www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/1887)

## **How do I eat more fibre?**

### **Grain products**

- Eat whole wheat or whole-grain bread, pasta, and cereals.
- Choose brown rice instead of white rice. You can also add brown rice or quinoa to your white rice.

- Try whole grains, like:
  - › Quinoa
  - › Barley
  - › Bulgur wheat
- Eat cereals with at least 4 grams of fibre per serving, like grain and bran cereals.
- Put natural bran, oat bran, and bran cereal in, or on top of:
  - › Cooked or ready-to-eat cereal
  - › Applesauce
  - › Yogurt
  - › Ground beef
  - › Casseroles
- Bake muffins, cookies, and breads with whole-grain flours.

## **Fruits and vegetables**

- Try to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at each meal.
- Choose whole fruits instead of fruit juice more often.
- Eat raw vegetables and fruits for snacks.
- Try fruits for dessert.
- Eat the skin on fruits and vegetables (like potato skins or apple peels).
- Add grated carrots, chopped broccoli, or cooked green peas to salads, stir-fries, casseroles, rice, or noodles.
- Try spinach or cabbage instead of lettuce in salads.

- Add dried fruits to cereals and baked goods.

## Protein foods

- Replace meat with pulses more often, or replace half of the meat in a recipe with pulses.
- Add pulses to salads and casseroles.
- Sprinkle seeds on salads, sandwich fillings, yogurt, or cereals.
- Roast soybeans (edamame) or chickpeas for a snack.
- Try snacking on  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of nuts or add nuts to salads or cereals.
- Have bean dip or hummus with crackers and chopped vegetables.

Use these examples to help plan your meals.

Sample meal plan	Low-fibre (in grams)	High-fibre (in grams)
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kellogg's Rice Krispies<sup>®</sup> (1 cup) = 0.3</li> <li>• Milk (<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup) = 0</li> <li>• Apple juice (<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup) = 0.1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post<sup>®</sup> Bran Flakes (1 cup) = 7.4</li> <li>• Milk (<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup) = 0</li> <li>• Banana = 2.1</li> </ul>

<b>Sample meal plan</b>	<b>Low-fibre (in grams)</b>	<b>High-fibre (in grams)</b>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yogurt (½ cup) = 0</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yogurt (½ cup) with strawberries (7) = 4</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turkey and cheese sandwich (white bread) = 1.6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turkey and cheese sandwich (whole-wheat bread) = 4.8</li> </ul>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grapes (20) = 1.5</li> <li>• Cheddar cheese = 0</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apple = 2.6</li> <li>• Natural peanut butter (2 Tbsp.) = 2.5</li> </ul>
Supper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken breast (½ cup) = 0</li> <li>• White rice (1 cup) = 0.8</li> <li>• Boiled cauliflower (1 cup) = 3.6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken breast (½ cup) = 0</li> <li>• Brown rice (1 cup) = 3</li> <li>• Boiled broccoli (1 cup) = 4</li> </ul>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potato chips (1 small bag) = 1.6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air popped popcorn (3 cups) = 3.9</li> </ul>
<b>Total fibre</b>	<b>10.9 grams</b>	<b>35.7 grams</b>

# Notes:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:  
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:  
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

*Prepared by:* Nutrition and Food Services  
*Designed by:* Nova Scotia Health Library Services

LC85-0556 © January 2024 Nova Scotia Health Authority  
The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.