How to Increase Fiber in the Meal Plan for Diabetes

SPECIAL NOTES

Increasing fiber in the diet has many benefits including lowering blood cholesterol, helping to control blood sugars, preventing constipation and aiding in weight management by helping you feel full longer. Start adding fiber to your diet slowly. A gradual substitution of high-fiber for low-fiber foods will allow the digestive tract to adjust. Most men under 50 years of age should aim to eat 38 grams of fiber a day. Women should aim for 25 grams. Over 50 years of age, most men need 30 grams of fiber with women needing 21 grams. Below are some suggestions for increasing fiber.

- **Try** whole wheat bread **instead of** white bread. Look for words high on the list of ingredients such as whole wheat, whole rye or whole oats.
- **Try** baked potato with skin **instead of** mashed potatoes.
- **Try** a fresh apple with skin **instead of** applesauce.
- **Try a** fresh orange **instead of** orange juice.
- **Try** popcorn **instead of** potato chips.
- **Try** bran cereal **instead of** corn flakes.
- **Try** kidney, whole pinto or garbanzo beans **instead of** bread.
- **Try** whole grain crackers **instead of** Saltines.
- **Try** whole wheat pasta **instead of** regular varieties.
- Drink plenty of liquids on a high-fiber diet. Six to 8 cups of fluid are recommended each day.
- Eat a variety of high - fiber foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.
- Try to increase your intake of fiber through using high-fiber foods rather than fiber pills or supplements that contain small amounts of fiber, since there can be additional benefits for long-term health and blood sugar control. Aim for five servings of fruit and vegetables a day.

SOURCES OF FIBER

The following list shows the average dietary fiber for general types of food in the various food groups.

STARCH/BREAD

- Whole-grain breads and grain (1 slice or 1/2 cup, 2 grams of dietary fiber).
- Whole-grain cereals (1/2 cup, 3 grams of dietary fiber).
- Bran cereals (1/3-1/2 cup, 8 grams of dietary fiber).
- Starchy vegetables (1/2 cup, 3 grams of dietary fiber).
- Legumes - beans, peas, lentils (1/2 cup, 8 grams of dietary fiber).
- Oatmeal (1/2 cup, 2 grams of fiber).
- Whole wheat pasta (1/3 cup, 2 grams of fiber).
- Brown rice (1/2 cup, 2 grams of fiber).
- Barley (1/2 cup, 3 grams of fiber).

MEAT & MEAT SUBSTITUTES

- 1 oz. or 1/4 cup, 0* grams of dietary fiber.

VEGETABLES

- Cooked vegetables (1/2 - 3/4 cup, cooked, 2 - 3 grams of dietary fiber).
- Raw vegetables (1 to 2 cups , 2 - 3 grams of dietary fiber).

FRUIT (RAW OR COOKED)

- 1/2 cup or 1 small fresh, (2 grams of dietary fiber).

MILK

- 1 cup (8 oz.), (0 grams of dietary fiber).

FATS & OILS

- 1 tsp., (0 grams of dietary fiber).

These groups average 0 grams of fiber; however: Nuts, seeds, 1 oz. (1/4 cup) or chunky peanut butter, 2 tbsp, (3 grams of dietary fiber).

You can also help determine how much fiber you are eating by reading the Nutrition Facts panels on the labels of the foods you eat.

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