Fiber and Health

Fact Sheet

The Plantrician Project®
Planting the seeds of change™

A high-fiber diet reduces the risk of developing various conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, diverticular disease, constipation and colon cancer. Dietary fiber consists of resistant carbohydrates found in:

FRUIT | VEGETABLES | TUBERS & STARCHY VEGETABLES | WHOLE GRAINS | LEGUMES

The gut bacteria metabolize this type of fiber into short-chain fatty acids, which are the main source of nutrition for the colon's cells. These fatty acids are linked to lower risk of:

- Inflammatory diseases
- Obesity
- Cardiovascular disease
- Type 2 diabetes

How much fiber do we need?

Adequate Intake recommendations for total daily fiber intake as stated by the NIH is:

	Age (years)	Dietary Fiber DRI (grams per day)
Children	1-3	19
	4-8	25
Female	9-13	26
	14-18	26
	19-50	25
	50+	21
Male	9-13	31
	14-18	38
	19-50	38
	50+	30

What are the types of fiber?

Many foods consist of both insoluble fiber and soluble fiber, which is why it is so important to consume a wide variety of whole plant foods daily.

Insoluble fiber adds bulk to the stool and helps food pass more quickly through the stomach and intestines, acting like a broom. Foods rich in insoluble fiber include:

- Apples
- Kale
- Celery
- Cocoa
- Wheat
- Figs

Soluble fiber attracts water and turns to gel during digestion, acting like a mop. This slows digestion. Foods rich in soluble fiber:

- Potatoes
- Oats
- Beans and peas
- Seaweed
- Mushrooms
- Raspberries
- Blackberries
- Pears
- Strawberries
- Artichokes
- Flax and chia seeds

Prebiotic fiber is a class of fiber that acts to beneficially alter the microbes in the gut. Foods rich in prebiotic fiber include:

- Leeks
- Asparagus
- Artichokes
- Garlic
- Onions
- Wheat
- Oats
- Soybeans

Resistant starch is a type of prebiotic fiber that selectively stimulates healthy bacteria. Foods rich in resistant starch:

- Corn
- Unripened bananas
- Plantains
- Beans
- Rice
- Cooked and cooled potatoes