



ARTICLE / KITCHEN TIPS

Easy Ways to Boost Fiber

Most Americans don't eat enough of this crucial nutrient. See why fiber is so important, and how to make sure you're getting what you need.



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Posted Feb 28, 2022



Quick Whole Wheat Pizza Dough from The Novice Housewife

It's not the prettiest nickname, but you might call me The Fiber Queen. Many moons ago, I lost 100 pounds on Weight Watchers. At the time, the program was called Fat & Fiber — all I had to do was make sure I ate below a certain amount of fat, and above a given threshold for fiber. These days I'm focused on healthy fats, not low fat, but fiber's star has continued to rise. I've lost count of the health benefits it's been shown to provide.

And if you're like most Americans, your daily diet doesn't include anywhere near enough.

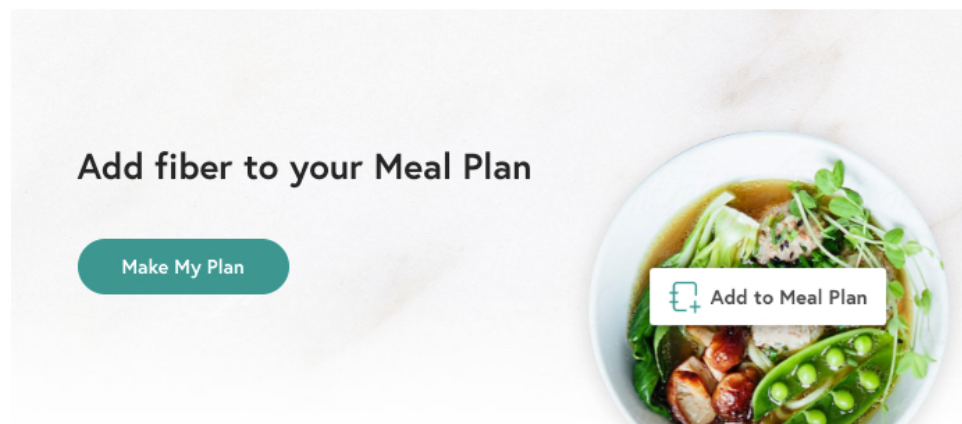
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Note: The [Yummly Meal Planner](#) is available to paid subscribers.

Common questions about fiber

Understand the importance of fiber, and how much you should have each day

Why is fiber so important for my health?

For such a humble substance, fiber sure can do a lot. One [major review of research](#) found that people who eat a high-fiber diet reduced their odds of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and several types of cancer. It may lower your cholesterol levels as well as your blood pressure. [Another review](#) found that, in addition to helping to prevent constipation, eating high fiber foods benefits your gut bacteria, and it may help you lose weight, lower blood sugar levels, and reduce inflammation.

How much fiber per day?

Depending on your age, the [USDA's 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) recommends women eat 22-28 grams of dietary fiber each day, while men should consume 28-34 grams. More than 90% of women and a whopping 97% of men [don't pull that off](#). Unless you know you're eating a high-fiber diet, you're probably among them.

How much fiber is too much?

It's hard to eat too much fiber, but too much at once can be hard on your digestive system. You might cause yourself some discomfort (symptoms like gas, bloating, and stomach cramping) if you quickly and drastically boost your fiber intake. If you're currently eating very little, start by adding a serving of fruit, vegetables, or whole grains at meals, then build from there. And make sure to drink plenty of water to help keep things moving — if you increase your fiber without enough liquid in your diet, you can wind up constipated.

What foods are high in fiber?

Fiber is found in plants — think fruits, vegetables, beans and legumes, and whole grains. That's right, it's all about carbohydrates. People on extreme low-carb diets may not get enough without taking fiber supplements.

Your body needs **two types of fiber**, soluble and insoluble. Soluble fiber soaks up water and turns to gel, which slows digestion — that helps you feel full, longer. Insoluble fiber is what you may think of as "roughage" — the stuff your body doesn't break down as much. It helps food pass through your digestive system and keeps bowel movements regular.

Tips and recipes to increase your fiber intake

Here are five easy ways to boost fiber, with delicious recipes to get you started

Start with breakfast

If you kick off your day with a fiber-filled breakfast, you're already well on your way. Many traditional breakfast foods make it easy, too — anything that's full of fruit, like smoothies and yogurt parfaits, vegetables, like breakfast burritos and omelets, or whole grains, like avocado toast and oatmeal, is likely to provide a few grams of fiber.

Ultimate Breakfast Berry Smoothie





Ultimate Breakfast Berry Smoothie by Cupful Of Kale



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A quick whirl in the blender gets you an impressive 13 grams of fiber thanks to loads of fruit — strawberries, raspberries, blackcurrants, and bananas — plus chia seeds and oats. Sweet and filling, this makes a great breakfast on-the-go.

Chickpea Avocado Toast



Chickpea Avocado Toast by Skinny Ms





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Spreading mashed avocado on toasted whole grain bread already provides a good dose of fiber, but add some smashed chickpeas to the mix (along with lemon juice and cilantro to boost the flavor) and you've got even more.



Breakfast Burrito



Breakfast Burrito by [Hungry Healthy Happy](#)



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Now this is a filling breakfast. I'm pretty sure I won't need to eat for hours after downing one of these beauties — it's got veggies in the form of salsa, avocado, and onion and bell pepper scrambled with eggs, along with refried beans plus a little sausage and cheese — all wrapped up in a whole-wheat tortilla.



Add bulk to baked goods

This is one of my favorite ways to sneak some extra fiber into my 15-year-old son: When I'm baking, I almost always minimize the all-purpose and substitute whole wheat flour, whole wheat pastry flour, or a fiber-providing alternative like almond flour. And that's just one way to boost the fiber in baked goods.

Quick Whole Wheat Pizza Dough



Quick Whole Wheat Pizza Dough by The Novice Housewife



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A 100% whole wheat pizza crust guarantees a better-for-you pizza — and this one only needs a single rise, for just one hour. Or, do it like I do: Make your dough the night before and pop it in the fridge for a long, slow rise. Homemade pizza for dinner is super-easy that way. And don't forget to use tons of vegetable toppings, for even more fiber.

Chocolate Black Bean Brownie Bites





Chocolate Black Bean Brownie Bites by [Chocolate Covered Katie](#)



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These fudgy, flourless treats use pureed black beans for body (don't worry, you won't taste them), along with cocoa powder (which has **2 grams of fiber per tablespoon**) and oats. A single brownie bite gives you 3 grams of fiber!

Gluten-Free Peanut Butter Chocolate Chunk Bars



Gluten-Free Peanut Butter Chocolate Chunk Bars by [Yummly](#)



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I'm a sucker for chewy combos of peanut butter and chocolate, and these bars deliver all the satisfaction along with a healthy dose of fiber. Creamy PB, almond flour, oats, and dark chocolate chips all contribute. The only problem here? I might eat the whole tray in one sitting.

Make simple swaps

This might be the easiest way to add fiber to your meals: Swap in foods with fiber for their wimpy cousins. Think quinoa instead of white rice, whole wheat pasta rather than regular, shredded wheat cereal over cornflakes.

Avocado "Mayonnaise"



Avocado "Mayonnaise" by [Rachael Ray Show](#)



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When you want a creamy spread for your sandwiches or salads, reach for avocados instead of a jar of mayo. Not only will you add fiber to your meal, you'll also be getting the fruit's heart-healthy fats.

Overstuffed Veggie Sandwich



Overstuffed Veggie Sandwich by Skinny Ms



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Opting for store-bought items with fiber is even easier than pureeing avocados. Here, you're using whole wheat bread (look for labels that promise "100% whole wheat") along with oodles of vegetables and a few slices of muenster cheese. Each sandwich has 23 grams of fiber! That's a whole day's worth for most women.

Soup it up

Soups and stews usually have plenty of vegetables, and often beans and legumes, too. And stews often get served with something to soak up the sauce — use whole wheat noodles or couscous, brown rice, or quinoa for an additional fiber boost.

Hearty Lentil Soup





Hearty Lentil Soup by Yummly



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One bowl of this cozy soup will give you 12 grams of fiber and keep you feeling satisfied for hours. And it makes a big batch, so you'll have plenty of leftovers for lunch. Or do what I do: Freeze individual portions, and grab one as needed. It only takes a few minutes to defrost in the microwave.

Homemade Minestrone Soup {Slow Cooker}

When I was growing up, I ate more cans of Progresso minestrone than I care to count. It was so filling! All the soft vegetables, and the beans, and the tomato broth ... But oy, so much sodium. Making it from scratch in the slow cooker takes just about the same amount of effort, only you control the ingredients and the salt.

Lemony Chickpea Stew with Pasta and Artichokes





Lemony Chickpea Stew with Pasta and Artichokes by The Seattle Times



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Frozen artichoke hearts are one of my favorite ways to make something simple seem fancier — plus each little heart has **almost two grams of fiber**. Add that to the chickpeas, onion, carrot, and baby spinach (though you can also use frozen here), and you've got yourself a comforting, lemon-scented dinner with 14 grams of fiber per serving.



Choose fiber-filled snacks

*Every time I eat, I try to include one or two sources of fiber — and snacking offers plenty of opportunities. One cup of blueberries, for instance, has **almost four grams of fiber and only 85 calories**. (That's one reason blueberries are often called a superfood.)*

Hummus





Hummus by Einat Admony



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Hummus is the OG fiberific snack, if you ask me, especially if you scoop it up with veggie sticks or whole wheat pita. This classic recipe includes a handful of clever tips to make it super-fluffy and flavorful. It starts with dried chickpeas, but the instructions also include an option to use canned.

Dill Pickle Popcorn





Dill Pickle Popcorn by Food and Wine



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Popcorn is a whole grain, so air-popped is my go-to snack when I'm looking for something crunchy. I enjoy it with nothing but a drizzle of melted butter and salt, but I like it even more when it's jazzed up with fun seasoning. Here, you toss popped corn with a powder made from pickling spices.

Fig and Almond Energy Bites



Fig and Almond Energy Bites by KitchenAid



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A quick whirl in the food processor is all it takes to turn dried fruit like figs and dates, almond butter, oats, flaxseeds, and a little vanilla extract into these sweet and gooey treats. Each one has a generous three grams of fiber.