



Get The Nutrients You Need

To get needed nutrients, vary your food choices.

Foods made from grains (like wheat, rice, and oats) help form the base of a nutritious diet. They provide vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates (starch and dietary fiber), and substances called **phytochemicals** (plant chemicals) that are important for good health. Grain products are low in fat, unless fat is added in processing, in preparation, or at the table. These foods are not fattening, unless eaten in excess or if fats (butter, sour cream, etc.) are added to them.



Choose whole wheat grains and breads over white, enriched ones.

Whole Grain Foods

Choose foods that name one of the following ingredients first on the label's ingredient list:

<input type="checkbox"/> Brown rice	<input type="checkbox"/> Oatmeal
<input type="checkbox"/> Bulgur (cracked wheat)	<input type="checkbox"/> Popcorn
<input type="checkbox"/> Graham flour	<input type="checkbox"/> Pearl barley
<input type="checkbox"/> Whole grain corn	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole oats
<input type="checkbox"/> Whole rye	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole wheat

Try some of these whole grain foods: Whole wheat bread, whole grain ready-to-eat cereal, low-fat whole wheat crackers, oatmeal, whole wheat pasta, whole barley in soup, and cracked wheat in tabouli salad.

Refined grains are low in dietary fiber.

Good Sources of Nutrients in Fruits and Vegetables

Good Sources of Vitamin A (carotenoids)

- Orange vegetables, such as carrots, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin
- Dark-green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, collards, and turnip greens
- Mango; cantaloupe; apricots; and tomatoes

Vitamin A is needed for night vision and helps fight infections.

Good Sources of Vitamin C

- Citrus fruits and juices; kiwi fruit; strawberries; cantaloupe
- Broccoli; peppers; tomatoes; cabbage; and potatoes
- Leafy greens, such as romaine lettuce, turnip greens, and spinach

Vitamin C helps heal wounds and aids iron absorption.

Good Sources of Folate (a B vitamin)

- Cooked dry beans and peas; peanuts
- Oranges and orange juice
- Dark-green leafy vegetables, such as spinach and mustard greens; romaine lettuce; green peas

Folate prevents some birth defects and is needed to make red blood cells and for growth.

Good Sources of Potassium

- Baked white or sweet potatoes; cooked greens, such as spinach; winter (orange) squash
- Bananas; potatoes; dried fruits, such as apricots and prunes; orange juice
- Lentils; cooked, dry beans, such as baked beans

Potassium is needed for fluid balance and helps control activity of heart muscle, kidneys, and nervous system.

Fruits & Vegetables



These foods are nutrient dense. This means that they give a lot of nutrients, but are low in calories.

Fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and a variety of **phytochemicals** (plant chemicals) that may play a role in preventing certain diseases.

More Information

Fruits & Veggies —
More Matters®
www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

Guidelines For Choosing Fruits and Vegetables

- Strive to eat 5 servings a day of fruits and vegetables. Do not add fat.
- Also, eat a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. Choose from fresh, canned, frozen, etc.
- Choose fruits and vegetables of different colors, to get a variety of **phytochemicals** (plant chemicals). Certain plant chemicals have been linked with the prevention and treatment of cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure.
- Regularly choose whole or cut up fruits and vegetables over juices. Juices have little or no fiber. Chewing fruits and vegetables takes more time and can be more filling than swallowing juice.
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before using.
- Refrigerate most fruits and vegetables to retain nutrients. Exceptions are bananas, onions, garlic, and tomatoes. After you cut or peel these, though, put them in the refrigerator.
- Find ways to include different fruits and vegetables in your meals and snacks.
- Keep ready-to-eat raw vegetables handy in a clear container in the front of your refrigerator for snacks or meals-on-the-go.
- Enjoy fruits as a naturally sweet end to a meal.
- When eating out, choose a variety of vegetables at a salad bar. Another idea is to get your lunch at a produce store. Some have salad bars and sandwiches made to order. All have plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables to choose from. Wash these at the store's water fountain before you eat them.
- When you cook vegetables, do so quickly and in as little water as possible. Some vitamins, like vitamin C, are destroyed when soaked in water and/or overcooked.



Choose fruits and vegetables of different colors to get a variety of nutrients.

Phytochemicals (Plant Chemicals)

Plant Chemical	Importance	Found In
Allium compounds	Enhances the immune system. May lower blood pressure and cholesterol.	Onions, garlic, leeks, chives, shallots
Beta carotene	May reduce the risk for cancer and heart disease	Orange, yellow, and red fruits and vegetables (e.g., apricots, broccoli, cantaloupe, and spinach)
Anthocyanins	May protect against heart disease	Blueberries, kiwi fruit, plums, strawberries
Indoles	May protect against some cancers	Broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, turnips
Lutein	May lower the risk for age-related macular degeneration	Broccoli, collard greens, kale, romaine lettuce, spinach, and kiwi fruit
Lycopene	May help prevent prostate cancer and heart disease	Tomatoes, red peppers, pink grapefruit, and watermelon
Resveratrol	Protects against heart disease	Red grapes
Sulphoraphane	May help protect against cancer	Bok choy, broccoli, kale, cabbage, and collard greens
Isoflavonoids	Can reduce cholesterol levels	Soy foods, such as tofu, soybeans, and soymilk
Genistein (a phytoestrogen)	May lower the risk for breast, colon, and prostate cancer	Soy foods, such as tofu, soybeans, and soymilk

Eat Foods With Dietary Fiber

What Is Dietary Fiber?

Fiber is a carbohydrate. It does *not* provide 4 calories per gram that other carbohydrates do because the body does not break down fibers and absorb them. Foods with fiber do, however, have calories. Fiber is found in plant foods. Animal foods **do not** have fiber.



Dietary fiber is found in whole grains and fruits and vegetables.

Two Types of Fiber		
	Insoluble in Water	Soluble in Water
Food sources	Whole grains, wheat, barley, bran, bulgur, brown rice, corn, skins and seeds of fruits and vegetables	Oats, oatmeal, legumes (beans, dried peas, lentils), fleshy parts of fruits and vegetables, such as apples, pears, carrots
Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps keep the stools soft and prevents constipation• Reduces the risk of diverticulosis and diverticulitis• Reduces the risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delays emptying of the stomach and slows food absorption, so aids in weight control• Helps lower cholesterol when combined with a low fat diet• Reduces the risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease

How Much Fiber Do You Need Each Day?

Daily Reference Values are guidelines for nutrient needs. These are listed on food labels and depend on total caloric intake. The Daily Reference Value (DRV) for fiber is 11.5 grams per 1000 calories. So, if you eat 1200-1300 calories a day, you should aim to get at least 15 grams of fiber per day; at least 18 grams per day for 1500-1600 calories; and at least 20 grams per day for 1800 calories.

Most persons get only 11 to 15 grams of fiber a day. Many health officials advise getting 20 to 35 grams of fiber a day. To get this much fiber when you limit calories, you need to do the following:

- Have whole-grain breads, cereals, and pasta instead of white and refined breads, cereals, and pasta.
- Have legumes (beans, etc.) in salads, soups, chili, etc.
- Regularly choose whole fruits over fruit juices.
- Snack on raw vegetables instead of high-fat and high-calorie snacks like chips, cookies, etc.
- Discuss taking fiber supplements with your doctor.

The charts that follow list the estimated dietary fiber content for a variety of foods.

From plant foods only
Indigestible carbohydrate
Bulk, residue, roughage
Estimated safe amount
per day = 20 to 35
grams
Reduces risk for certain
diseases

Fiber Content of Foods

Cereals	Fiber (Grams)
1 oz. Fiber One®	12
1 oz. All-Bran®	9
1 oz. Bran Flakes®	4
1 cup Wheaties®	3
1 cup Cheerios®	2.7
³ / ₄ oz. Total®	2.4
1 oz. oatmeal	2

Fruits	Fiber (Grams)
¹ / ₂ cup raspberries	4.2
1 pear	4
1 apple, raw with skin	3.7
¹ / ₂ cup blackberries	3.5
1 medium orange	3.1
1 medium banana	3
¹ / ₂ cup blueberries	2
5 dates, dried	2
1 peach	2
¹ / ₂ cup strawberries	1.9
¹ / ₂ cup applesauce, canned, unsweetened	1.5
¹ / ₂ cup orange juice	.2

Breads/Pastas, etc.	Fiber (Grams)
2 slices “lite” wheat bread	5.6
¹ / ₂ cup whole wheat pasta	3.2
1 medium bran muffin	3
1 slice whole wheat bread	2
1 slice rye bread	1.9
¹ / ₂ cup cooked brown rice	1.7
1 cup air-popped popcorn	1.2
¹ / ₂ cup pasta	1.2
1 slice raisin bread	1.1
1 slice white bread	.6
¹ / ₂ cup white rice	.3

Vegetables	Fiber (Grams)
¹ / ₂ cup cooked frozen peas	4.4
1 medium baked potato (with skin)	3.8
1 cup cooked cabbage	2.8
¹ / ₂ cup cooked turnip greens	2.5
¹ / ₂ cup cooked carrots	2.4
¹ / ₂ cup cooked broccoli	2.3
¹ / ₂ cup cooked corn	2
¹ / ₂ cup cooked green beans	2
1 fresh tomato	1.4
1 cup iceberg lettuce	1

Fiber Content of Foods, cont.

Cooked Legumes	Fiber (Grams)
1 cup chili con carne with beans	8.2
1/2 cup pinto beans, cooked	7.8
1/2 cup lentils, cooked	7.8
1/2 cup kidney beans, cooked	6.6
1/2 cup baked beans, cooked	6
1 cup soy milk	
1 Tbsp. peanut butter	.9

Note: Increase fiber gradually. Too much, too soon can cause gas. Also, drink plenty of water when you increase fiber in your diet.