

Client Name _____ Date _____

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Heart Healthy Fiber Tips

Fiber is the structural part of plant foods that is not digested. There are two types of fiber in food: soluble (viscous) and insoluble. Because soluble fiber is not absorbed in the intestine, it can bind cholesterol and remove it from the body.

Fiber's Benefits

Soluble (viscous) fiber is especially helpful in lowering LDL (low-density lipoprotein, or “bad”) cholesterol. Insoluble fiber aids in laxation and prevents constipation. Try to eat 25 to 30 grams of total fiber each day, and 5 to 10 grams of soluble fiber each day.

Eating 5 to 10 grams of soluble fiber every day can help lower your LDL cholesterol by 5 to 11 points—sometimes more. By reading nutrition fact labels on products, you can compare the fiber content of foods. Work toward achieving these fiber goal gradually, and be sure to drink plenty of water when you increase your fiber intake. This will help you avoid problems with gas.

Ways to Add Fiber to Your Eating Plan

- Add fiber to foods you already eat:
 - Sprinkle oat bran or rice bran on cereal.
 - Add almonds to salad.
 - Include dried beans in soup
 - Mix ground flaxseed into muffins.
- Eat whole fruit rather than drinking juice. Pears and prunes are especially rich in fiber. Other fruits high in fiber:
 - 1 medium apple, banana, guava, orange, or peach
 - 2 apricots or plums
 - ½ mango
 - ¼ cup figs or dried apricots
 - 3 prunes
 - 1 cup raspberries, blackberries, or strawberries
- Select vegetables with lots of soluble fiber, such as Brussels sprouts, acorn squash, lima beans, broccoli, cabbage, green beans, onions, parsnips, turnips, carrots, okra, and eggplant.
- Look for whole grain products, especially those with oats and barley.
- Add vegetables to sandwiches, or eat a peanut butter sandwich on whole grain bread.

- Have bean dip or hummus for snacks.
- Healthy fats with 1 or more grams of soluble fiber are 2 tablespoons avocado, 1 tablespoons whole chia seeds, and 2 tablespoons ground flax seeds.
- Eat lean protein foods that have fiber like beans (black beans, navy beans, kidney beans, lima beans, pinto beans), chickpeas, black-eyed peas, and soybeans.
- A natural fiber supplement like psyllium, a plant seed powder, can also be taken. Start with a small dose mixed with water then slowly increase the dose, taking as directed. Drink extra water as you increase your daily fiber intake. Fluid needs vary, but 9 to 12 cups of fluid a day are recommended for most healthy people.

Fiber-Rich Foods

Include many foods with 1 to 3 grams of soluble fiber in your daily diet plan. This chart shows how much total and soluble fiber is in one serving of some foods.

Legumes	Total Fiber (grams)	Soluble Fiber (grams)
½ cup cooked lentils	8	1
½ cup lima beans	7	3
½ cup baked beans	6	3
½ cup kidney beans	6	3
½ cup green peas	4	1
Grains		
½ cup oatmeal, regular, before cooking		2
½ cup cooked barley	4	1
½ cup raisin bran	4	1
1 slice whole wheat bread	2	Trace
Fruits		
1 large pear	5	3
1 medium apple	4	1
1 medium orange	4	1
1 medium banana	3	1
Vegetables		
½ cup cooked Brussels sprouts	3	2
½ cup cooked carrots	3	1
½ cup cooked winter squash	3	2
1 medium baked potato with skin	3	1
½ cup cooked broccoli	1	1

Notes: