

Fibre in your diet

WHAT IS FIBRE?

Fibre is only found in plant food. It is divided into two broad types based on the way it functions in the body:

1. Soluble fibre
2. Insoluble fibre

SOLUBLE FIBRE

Soluble fibre can benefit health by:

- ✓ Lowering blood cholesterol levels. High blood cholesterol levels are a risk factor for heart disease
- ✓ Delaying the absorption of sugar from the gut thereby improving control of blood glucose (sugar) levels for people with diabetes. Some foods high in fibre also have a low glycaemic index.

Good sources of soluble fibre

- ✓ Oats including rolled oats and porridge; barley.
- ✓ Legumes including baked beans, kidney beans, other dried beans (home cooked or canned), lentils, split peas, chickpeas.
- ✓ Fruit.

INSOLUBLE FIBRE

Insoluble fibre can benefit health by:

- ✓ Acting as a bulking agent. Through absorbing water and forming softer faeces, fibre helps to prevent constipation and keep the gut healthy
- ✓ Promoting a feeling of fullness so people are less likely to overeat – this can help with weight management.

Good food sources of insoluble fibre

- ✓ Wholemeal or wholegrain bread – check packet labels and use bread that has at least 5g fibre per 100g bread.
- ✓ Wholegrain/bran breakfast cereals e.g. wheat biscuits and flakes. Check packet labels and use cereals that have at least 6g fibre per 100g cereal.
- ✓ Vegetables and fruit.



How much fibre do we need?

Most New Zealanders do not eat enough fibre. It is best to increase fibre intake slowly to avoid an upset stomach.

GUIDELINES



Adults - 25-30g per day; 30-40g if you have diabetes or to improve heart health.

How to achieve 30-40g fibre per day:

This is a guide only

2 wholewheat (breakfast cereal) biscuits	5g
1 apple, skin on	2g
4 slices wholegrain bread	8g
½ cup baked beans	8g
1 pear, skin on	3g
1 kumara	3g
½ cup peas	4.5g
1 carrot	2.5g
Total	36g

TOP TIPS

- ✓ By including high fibre foods, you also benefit from many accompanying vitamins and minerals that protect your health.
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- ✓ Having breakfast is important to reach the recommended fibre intake.
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- ✓ Eat at least 3 servings of vegetables and 2 servings of fruit every day (one serving fits in the palm of your hand).
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- ✓ Use legumes often, e.g. chickpeas, lentils, baked beans, chilli beans.

