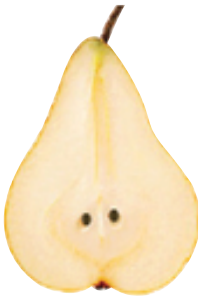


# know



## Fibre

Fibre delivers various health benefits and hence it is one of the important nutrients. Did you know that Urban Indians across all age groups are consuming diets that are nutritionally inadequate in several macro and micronutrients including fibre? Perhaps that's why we're a bit fuzzy about fibre facts such as: what it is, why it's so good for us, how much we need and where to find it. Get to know about fibre now!

### What is Fibre?

Fibre is a part of plant foods (e.g., grains, fruits, vegetables, beans) that the body doesn't digest. There are different types of fibre - soluble and insoluble each of which plays a role in maintaining good health.

### Soluble Fibre:

It acts like a 'sponge' in the gut to absorb water; some types actually form a gel in the body. Soluble fibre helps promote fullness and can help maintain healthy blood cholesterol and blood glucose levels.

Food sources: Oats; barley; psyllium (Isabgol); vegetables like cucumber, carrots; legumes like dals, chana, rajma, etc. ; fruits like apples, pears, oranges, bananas, strawberries etc.

### Insoluble Fibre:

It acts like a 'broom' in the gut. It sweeps food through the digestive tract to help promote regularity. It also "bulks up" by absorbing water, which helps promote fullness.

Food sources: Wheat bran, whole wheat and whole wheat products like whole wheat atta, whole wheat bread, dalia, rava/sooji, wheat based cereals, vegetables like cabbage, onion, capsicum; nuts; raisins; dark green leafy vegetables; fruit and root vegetable skin

### Why is Fibre Important?

Fibre is great for you in so many ways!

#### Evidence suggests that eating a fibre-rich diet:

- Improves digestive health in terms of maintaining bowel regularity and helps relieve or prevent constipation
- Can aid weight loss
- Can help to reduce blood cholesterol levels
- Can help to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers (including bowel cancer)





## How much fibre do you need?

According to Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), 2010, the fibre intake of 40g/2000kcal is considered to be reasonably safe

### How to Boost Your Fibre Intake!

- Begin your day with a bowl of high fibre, low-fat cereal
- Try oats porridge which is high in fibre
- Look for foods that are made with whole grain and are either source or high in fibre like breakfast cereals. They are an easy way for boosting the fibre intake first thing in the morning
- Eat chapatti made from whole wheat flour. Include combination of millets like whole jowar (sorghum), bajra (pearl millet), ragi/nachni(finger millet) and amaranth (rajgira)
- Replace white bread with whole wheat bread. Make sure it says 'High fibre' and not 'brown'
- Eat atleast 5-6 servings of vegetables and fruits each day
- Try a fruit smoothie instead of a glass of fruit juice to get more fibre
- Eat more of whole pulses and legumes (whole moong, masoor, chana, urad, rajmah etc.)
- Eat fibre - rich snacks like popcorn, whole wheat crackers / cereal bars, roasted chana etc.
- Top up your vegetable salads with sesame seeds (til), flaxseed (alsi)
- Include products that are made with whole grain wheat like pasta, noodles etc.
- Increase your fibre intake gradually to avoid problems of flatulence



### Point to be noted!

As you add fibre to your diet, it is important to drink plenty of fluids because fibre draws water into the intestines. Adequate intake of water (atleast 8 glasses daily) is therefore recommended.

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