



How Much Fiber Should I Eat?

Brought to you by:
Froedtert Hospital Dietitians



The average American gets about 14 grams of fiber daily. This is about half of what is recommended by most health agencies. The target is 25-35 grams per day, but many vegetarian societies get twice that amount with no ill effects. It is not that easy for the typical person to get enough fiber. Want a salad? You need about six and a half pounds of iceberg lettuce to get 30 grams of fiber. Think spinach is a high fiber alternative? You only need three pounds of that. Seedless grapes? 650 is the right number. Apples? Only 6. But don't give up!

It is crazy to expect to get all your fiber from one type of food. A daily menu with wheat bran cereal, whole grain bread, several servings of fruits and vegetables along with starchy foods can easily provide you with enough fiber to meet the recommended amounts. Snacks like popcorn, nuts, and dried fruit provide generous helpings of fiber.

The typical salad vegetables like lettuce and cucumber are generally poor sources of fiber, but root vegetables and beans are rich in this nutrient.

In addition, don't confuse "wheat flour" used to make white bread and cake with "whole wheat flour" which includes the fiber-rich bran. These starches are NOT the cause of obesity, despite a slew of popular books claiming this. Most healthy diets around the world are based on large amounts of complex carbohydrates with fiber included.

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