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## High Fiber Diet:

A diet high in fiber is important for regular bowel function. The common American diet is fiber deficient. The National Cancer Institute recommends 20 to 35 grams of dietary fiber per day. The average American diet contains only 12 grams of dietary fiber.

## What is Dietary Fiber

Fiber is plant material that passes through the digestive tract undigested. By absorbing water, fiber adds bulk and softens bowel movements. Fiber improves the wave-like contractions of the colon, called peristalsis. By adding bulk to stools, the diameter of the colon is increased. This relaxes the colon, relieving the spasms that are responsible for Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Diverticulosis. Some forms of fiber dissolve in water and are called soluble. Oats, barley, peas, beans, and citrus fruits are high in soluble fiber. Whole bran and some vegetables are sources of insoluble fiber. A balanced diet should contain both soluble and insoluble fiber.

## Fiber can Relieve common Digestive Complaints

### Hemorrhoids:

Are caused by swelling of vascular tissue in the rectum. Straining on hard stools, heavy lifting or pregnancy can worsen symptoms. High fiber diets are useful in reducing strain on the rectal area

### Diverticulosis:

Occurs when pockets of sacs bulge from the colon wall. These sacs result from spasm and high pressure inside the colon. Diverticulitis is the result of those sacs becoming infected. This can cause fever and abdominal pain. Fiber expands the colon and reduces the pressure inside, helping to prevent diverticulosis and its complications.

### Irritable Bowel Syndrome:

Is a common condition resulting from abdominal intestinal contractions. Symptoms include abdominal cramps, bloating, diarrhea and constipation. Dietary fiber helps to normalize bowel movements and reduce spasm and cramping.

### Constipation:

Is more often related to poor intake of dietary fiber. Slow colon transit results in excessive dry and hard bowel movement. Fiber stimulates colon transit, and softens bowel movements. Along with exercise, fiber is a safe non-habit forming laxative.

## High Fiber Foods:

1. Legumes - Kidney, Navy, Lima, Baked Beans
2. Whole Grains - Wheat Bran and Oat Bran Bread, Cereals or Bran Muffins.
3. Whole Fresh Fruits - Prunes and Berries have the highest Fiber out of these fruits. Also fruits with skins.
4. Green Leafy Vegetables - Lettuce, Spinach, Celery, and Broccoli
5. Root Vegetables - Potatoes, Turnips, and Carrots.
6. Cooked and Stewed fruits - Prunes and Applesauce.

Fiber supplements such as Psyllium (Metamucil or Konsyl) or Cellulose (Citrucel), can be used with food to achieve the goal of 20 to 35 grams per day. They should be used daily with plenty of liquids. Fiber supplements can take 2 to 3 weeks to work.

## Fiber Content:

The Food:	The Amount:	How much Fiber:
Kidney Beans	1/2 Cup	5.5 Grams
Lima Beans	1/2 Cup	4.4 Grams
Broccoli	3/4 Cup	5.0 Grams
Carrots	4 Raw carrot sticks	1.7 Grams
Corn	1/2 Cup	3.0 Grams
Potato	One small	4.2 Grams
Brown Rice	1/2 Cup	5.5 Grams
Green Beans	1/2 Cup	2.1 Grams
Lettuce	1/2 Cup	1.0 Grams
Raw Cabbage	1/2 Cup	2.0 Grams
Whole Wheat Bread	1 Slice	2.0 Grams
White Bread	1 Slice	1.0 Grams
Oat Bran	1/2 Cup	3.0 Grams
Bran Muffin	1 Muffin	3.0 Grams
General Mills Fiber One	1 Oz	12 Grams
Kellogg's Raisin Bran	1 Oz	4.0 Grams
Kellogg's Corn Flakes	1 Oz	1.0 Grams
Oatmeal		2.0 Grams
Popcorn	1 Cup	2.0 Grams
Pasta	1 Cup	1.0 Grams
Apple	1	2.8 Grams
Banana	1	2.0 Grams
Orange	1	3.0 Grams
Peach	1	2.0 Grams
Pear	1	3.0 Grams
Prunes	3.5 Oz	8.0 Grams
Figs	3.5 Oz	18 Grams
Watermelon	1 Slice	2.8 Grams
Raisins	2 Tbs	1.0 Grams
Almonds	1/4 Cup	5.0 Grams