

#breakfast
publichealth5-19service



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FIBRE FACTSHEET

This factsheet will provide you with information and very helpful links to lots of websites containing hints and tips about the importance of increasing the fibre in your child's diet.

TOP TIPS ABOUT FIBRE

Fibre is a nutrient found in all plants. Unlike many other nutrients found in foods, fibre is not digested by the body in a sense; fibre just goes through the digestive system. However, this is why fibre is good for you. Fibre helps clean out your digestive system and it helps make your stool (poo) soft and bulky. This helps prevent constipation.

A child aged 5-11 years should have 20 grams of fibre per day, and a child aged 11-16 years should have 25 grams of fibre per day.

Tip 1: Change to wholegrain cereals such as Weetabix, Shreddies, Fruit & Fibre, Bran Flakes, Porridge, Muesli (e.g. Alpen) and Cheerios, as these are high in fibre which will also help your child feel fuller for longer.

You can gradually change over by mixing a small amount of these cereals into your child's favourite cereals, and then gradually increase the wholegrain cereals. Cereals also make a great snack at suppertime, but keep to low sugar varieties such as porridge or shredded wheat in the evenings as others containing a lot of sugar could lead to tooth decay. With 9.1 grams of fibre per 1/3-cup serving, bran cereals are good high fibre foods for children.

Tip 2: Choose breads such as wholemeal, Hi Bran, Mighty White, wholemeal rolls, wholemeal pitta bread. Toasting wholemeal can make it more appealing. Disguise bread with beans or spaghetti on top or make sandwiches with one wholemeal and one white slice. A slice of whole-wheat bread contains 1.9 grams of fibre. So if you serve a sandwich with two slices, your child will consume close to 4 grams of fibre.

Tip 3: Try brown rice and wholemeal pasta, such as lasagne or pasta shapes. Use a mixture of brown rice and white rice or mix some wholemeal pasta with the white. A 1/2-cup serving of cooked whole-wheat pasta contains about 2 grams of fibre. Serve it combined with cooked vegetables. Brown rice is tasty but remember it will take slightly longer to cook!

Tip 4: Fruits and vegetables are very important in all healthy diets. There are no fruits and vegetables that should not be eaten, but high-fibre choices are better.

With 4 grams of fibre per half-cup serving, raspberries are a great source of fibre. A 1/2 cup of blueberries delivers 1.8 grams, and a 1/2 cup of strawberries supplies 1.5 grams of fibre. A small apple with the skin has 3.6 grams of fibre and is sweet enough that most children will readily eat it up. Serve apple slices with 2 tablespoons of peanut butter and you'll add another 1.6 grams of fibre. Fruit and vegetable juices should be limited since they have very little fibre and can contain a lot of sugar.

Tip 5: Add more vegetables to your child's diet and keep them raw or lightly cooked to keep their goodness. Add more to soups and stews and when having baked or boiled potatoes keep the skins on. Many children prefer vegetables when they're crunchy. Serve your child's favorites -- carrots, celery, cauliflower and broccoli -- alongside salsa, houmous or low-fat salad dressing for dipping. A Sweet potato with skin supplies 3.8 grams of fibre. It's also a great source of vitamins A and C.

Tip 6: Pulses are a great source of fibre. Try to accompany meals with green peas (fresh, frozen or canned), baked beans, and kidney beans. Vegetable and lentil soups are easy meals and very nutritious and low fat. Add butter beans and lentils to soups but also to mince to make a fibre filled Bolognese, shepherd's pie or chilli. A 1/2-cup serving of cooked green peas adds 4.4 grams of fibre to your child's meal.

Tip 7: High fibre biscuits can be a good alternative to pudding at the end of a meal or a quick and easy snack. Choose high fibre options such as Digestives, Hobnobs, bran biscuits, Oatcakes, wholegrain crackers, wholegrain crisp breads, muesli bars.

Tip 8: Nuts (consider allergies and children under 3 years) and seeds high in fibre include pumpkin seeds, dried coconut, flax seeds, almonds, pine nuts and pistachios. You can mix flax seed and coconut flakes into smoothies to increase your child's fibre intake and they may not even notice!

Raspberry-flax smoothie recipe

Fresh fruit smoothies are a great way to add more fibre in your diet. Adding flaxseed gives extra fibre. Try making this at home for breakfast. This recipe has 5g of fibre per serving.

Mix in a blender and serve:

- 1/2 cup (125 ml) of milk
- 6 oz. (175 g) plain vanilla yogurt
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) frozen raspberries
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) flaxseed

Option: add other fruits, such as pear with the skin.

Tip 9: Remember, when increasing your child's fibre intake you need to make sure they are drinking plenty of water around 6-8 glasses per day and to be active for 60 minutes a day.

VISIT THESE USEFUL WEBSITES

www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/healthy-eating.aspx

Department of Health campaign to help families eat well, free resources for all who join.

www.nutrition.org.uk

The British Nutrition Foundation has lots of information and guidance on how to increase fibre in our diets.

www.nhs.uk/livewell/goodfood

Information, advice and free resources on eating a balanced diet.

www.cumbriapartnership.nhs.uk/our-services/children-families

