

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.

