

Fibre & Plant Foods

The Benefits of Including Fibre & Plant Foods Following Stroke



What is Fibre?

- Fibre is a part of a plant that our bodies cannot break down.
- There are two types of fibre:
 - Soluble fibre, which absorbs water and become gel-like. This helps to control blood sugar levels and can lower blood cholesterol levels. Some examples: Avocado, tofu, sweet potato, turnip, and oats.
 - Insoluble fibre, which does not absorb water and is found in the skins of fruits and vegetables, and the bran portion of whole grains. This promotes regular bowel movement and prevents constipation. Some examples: kidney beans, flax seeds, and bran cereal.

Why is Fibre Important?

- Fibre binds to fat and glucose (sugar) in your digestive tract, which reduces the amount absorbed by your body
- Helps to decrease the amount of cholesterol made by the liver.
- Does not spike blood sugar levels, and makes you feel full longer.



Tips on Beans & Legumes

- Adding canned legumes/beans to your diet is a convenient way to eat more fibre.
- When purchasing canned legumes/beans, look for "low sodium" or "no salt added" options.
- Thoroughly rinse and drain canned legumes/beans to reduce your sodium intake.

How much fibre do you need?

- Aim for **25-50 grams** of fibre every day
- Slowly increase your fibre intake over time
- Spread your intake throughout the day
- Increase your water intake to prevent bloating

How do I get 25-50 grams of fibre daily?

Here is an **example**:

Breakfast

- 3/4 cup of steel cut oats (cooked)
- 1/2 cup of blueberries
- 1 tablespoon hempseeds
- Overall: 7.0 g of fibre**

Lunch

- Salad:
 - 1 cup of chickpeas (low sodium)
 - 3 cups of spinach
 - 15 cherry tomatoes
- 1 banana
- 1 slice whole grain bread
- Overall: 13.5 g of fibre**

Dinner

- 4 oz grilled salmon
- 1 cup cooked rapini
- 1.5 cups cooked quinoa
- 1/4 cup of corn
- 1/4 cup of green beans
- Overall: 13.3 g of fibre**

Total fibre for the day: 33.8 grams

What can I do to increase my fibre intake?

- Foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and cereals, legumes, nuts, and seeds all contain fibre.
- Start your day with a high fibre cereal, steel cut oats, or bran buds. Add fruit and/or nuts.
- Add ground flax, psyllium or oat bran on top of foods or use them in your baked goods.
- Plan your meals and snacks to always include fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables.
- Aim to have half your plate filled with vegetables. The more colour on your plate, the better.
- Include legumes and beans in your dishes.
 - Put kidney beans or chickpeas in salads or rice dishes.
 - Add lentils or black beans to soups.
 - Replace ground meat with crumbled extra firm tofu in a chili or lasagna.
 - Include a bean salad as a side dish.

Why are plant sterols important?

- Plant sterols compete with dietary cholesterol in the intestine for absorption into the blood.
- Occurs naturally in plant foods, such as vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds and vegetable oils.
- 2 grams of plant sterols per day can lower LDL (lousy) cholesterol by approximately 10%.*

*(Temme et al., 2002)



Some common Foods & Their Fibre Content

Fruits		Vegetables		Grains		Meat Alternatives	
Item	Fibre	Item	Fibre	Item	Fibre	Item	Fibre
Avocado, ½ fruit	7g	Green beans, ½ cup	5.5g	Brown Rice, ½ cup cooked	1g	Kidney beans, 1 cup cooked	12g
Banana, 1 medium	2g	Broccoli, ½ cup	2g	Whole grain bread, 1 slice	2.5g	Lentils, 1 cup cooked	9g
Orange, 1 medium	2g	Carrots, ½ cup	2g	Bran Cereal ½ - ⅓ cup	10-12 g	Soybean, 1 cup cooked	11.5g
Apple with skin 1 medium	2g	Corn, ½ cup	1.5g	Oat bran, ¾ cups cooked	5g	Chickpeas, 1 cup cooked	4g
Strawberries, ½ cup	3g	Kale, ½ cup	1.5g	Oatmeal, ¾ cup cooked	3.5g	Black beans, 1 cup cooked	5g
Raspberries, ½ cup	4g	Green peas, ½ cup	5.5g	Whole wheat pasta, ½ cup	2g	Tofu, ¾ cup	4g
Pear, 1 medium	5g	Spinach, ½ cup	2g	Quinoa, ½ cup cooked	2g	Almonds, ¼ cup	2.5g