

Healthy Weighs



The Importance of Fiber

Eating whole grain foods that are packed with fiber helps with weight control. Whole grain foods, such as oatmeal, contain essential vitamins and minerals and also gives the body carbohydrates for energy. Adding whole grain foods to your daily diet increases the amount of dietary fiber and protective components that have a positive impact on overall health.

Fiber is a general term referring to complex carbohydrates that your body cannot digest or absorb. Although our bodies do not digest fiber, it is a component of food that promotes good health in many ways. There are two types of dietary fiber: soluble and insoluble. Soluble fiber plays a role in satiety, or how full you feel, and can offer additional benefits, such as reducing blood cholesterol levels and maintaining blood sugar levels. Insoluble fiber aids the digestive system by helping to maintain regularity.

Adults and children should eat at least 3 servings of whole grain foods daily. Some examples include: a packet of instant oatmeal for breakfast, a slice of whole wheat bread with lunch, and a 1/2 cup of whole wheat pasta with dinner.

When looking for whole grain foods at the grocery store, look for a "100% whole grain" seal on the front of the package. Scan the ingredient list on the food label. Choose foods that name one of the following ingredients first on the label's ingredients list: whole oats, oatmeal, bulgur (cracked wheat), whole wheat, graham, flour, and corn.

Whole Grain Pantry Checklist

Popular Grain Items:

- ⇒ Pasta
- ⇒ Doughnuts
- ⇒ Waffles
- ⇒ Cookies
- ⇒ Muffins
- ⇒ White bread
- ⇒ Flour tortillas
- ⇒ White rice
- ⇒ Bagels
- ⇒ Crackers
- ⇒ White flour

Whole Grain Alternatives:

- ⇒ Whole Wheat Pasta
- ⇒ Whole grain granola bars
- ⇒ Whole grain waffles
- ⇒ Hearty Oatmeal Cookies
- ⇒ Whole grain muffins
- ⇒ Whole wheat bread
- ⇒ Corn tortillas
- ⇒ Brown rice
- ⇒ Whole grain bagels
- ⇒ Graham crackers
- ⇒ Substitute quick or old fashion oats for up to 1/3 of flour called for in recipes for baked goods

Source: American Dietetic Association

FIT TIPS

Daily Stretching

Flexibility and range of motion are lost with age. Muscles weaken from not being fully extended and used. Injury and falls become more prone. Stretching for just five to ten minutes a day can change that. As muscles are stretched, they get longer and stronger, and balance and control are improved. Posture can be improved, back problems prevented, and stress reduced with one activity.

Stretching tips:

- ♦ Warm-up before stretching. Either stretch after aerobics exercise or do five minutes of running in place or brisk walking before stretching.
- ♦ Go into a stretch slowly and with control, exhaling
- ♦ DO NOT BOUNCE. Hold the stretch for 10 to 30 seconds and feel it. Repeat once or twice.
- ♦ Stretch evenly, doing exercises on both sides of the body and feeling the pull in the center of the muscle instead of the joints.
- ♦ Do not force it. Flexibility will increase gradually if muscles are stretched daily.
- ♦ Ask a doctor or other health care professional for stretches that are appropriate for the work you do.

Boston Bean Soup: A High-Fiber/Low-Fat Recipe

- 2 15-oz cans cooked pinto beans, drained
- 2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped
- 1 rib celery, sliced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 bay leave
- 1 15-oz can reduced-sodium, fat-free beef broth
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste



- (1) In a medium pan, mix together the beans, tomatoes, celery, onion, bay leave, and broth. Cover. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat and simmer about 20 minutes or until the veggies are soft
- (2) Let the hot soup sit uncovered for 20 minutes. Remove the bay leave.
- (3) Puree half the soup in a blender. Recombine the remaining soup. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes four servings.

Per serving: 200 calories, <1g total fat, < 1g sat fat, 38 g carbohydrates, 12 g protein, 13 g dietary fiber, 287 mg sodium