



# FIBER

## HOW MUCH DO YOU REALLY NEED?

- You need **25 to 35 grams** of fiber a day. Ideally you want to eat a mixture of soluble and insoluble fiber (more on that later).
- Try to eat a diet that is high in fiber and low in saturated fats.
- Avoid processed and fast foods.

## YOUR DRINKS

- Drink **6-8 cups** of fluid per day. Drinking an adequate amount of fluid will help to keep your bowels regular.
- When the weather is hot and after exercise you will need to drink more.
- Fill a water bottle in the morning and sip on it through the day. If you are going out take it with you. Refill as it runs out. Avoid fluids in the evening.

## YOUR EXERCISE

- Exercise **several times per week** helps to keep bowel movements regular. Choose some form of exercise that you enjoy and that you can realistically fit into your daily routine. Consider a daily walk and some abdominal exercises.
- Look for **ways to be more active**. For example, take the stairs rather than the elevator, park your car at the far end of the parking lot rather than close to the door, or get off the bus a few blocks before your stop.
- Your physiotherapist can give you exercise ideas.
- If you have any health problems consult your family doctor before starting an exercise program to ensure the program is suitable for you.

## YOUR BOWELS

- Try to empty your bowels at the **same time** each day.

- The bowels tend to become active after you eat. Try to have your bowel movements **after a meal**. If the best time is after breakfast, then make sure you get up early enough so you have time.
- If you tend to be **constipated**, eat **insoluble** fiber (fibrous vegetables) which increases stool bulk, making the stool softer and speeds up the time it takes to move the stool through the intestines.

Examples of **insoluble fiber**:

- whole grains, wheat bran, most beans, lentils, dried fruits and fibrous vegetables with edible skins and seeds, corn, popcorn

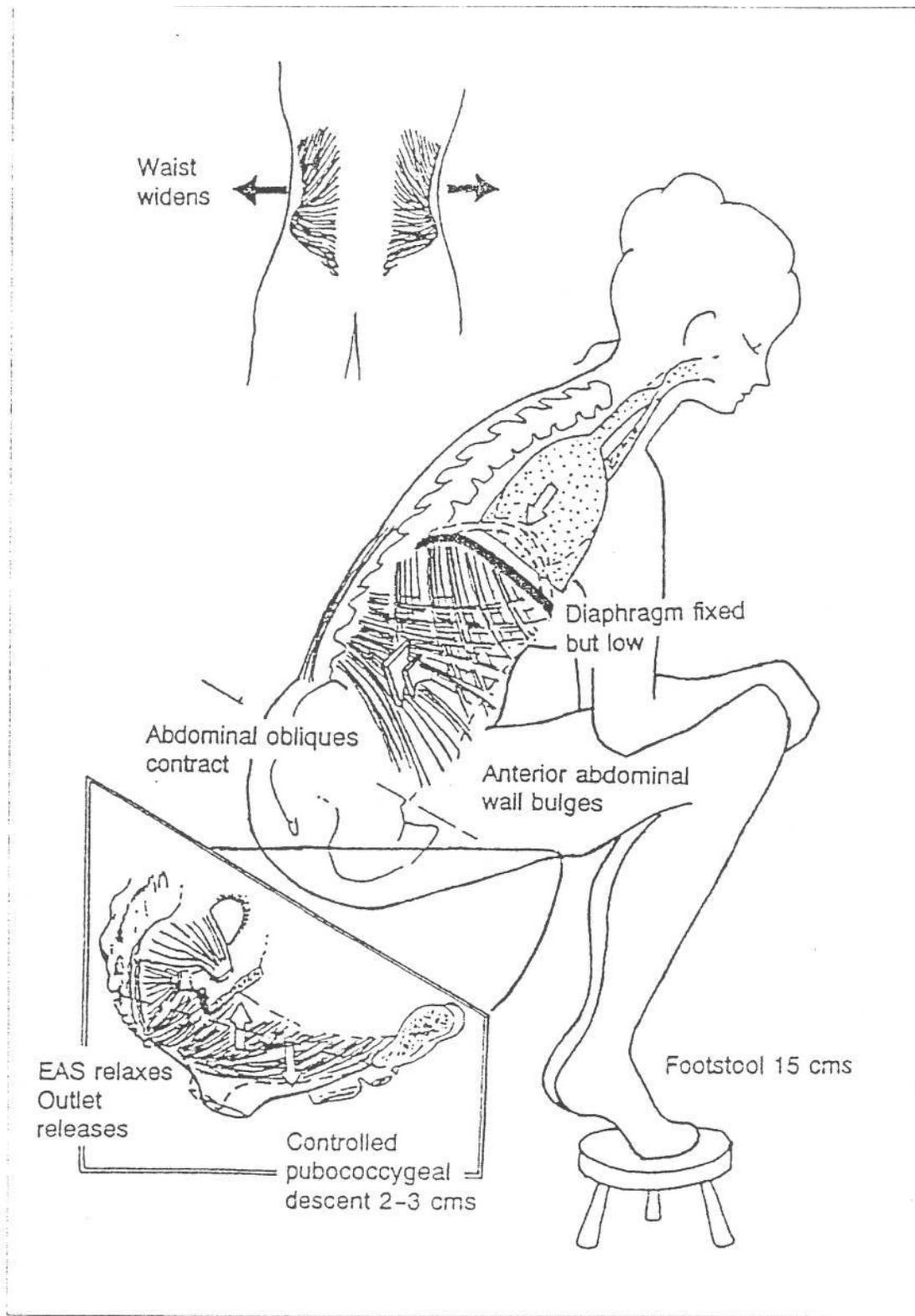
If you have a tendency to have **loose stools** you might have a sensitivity or allergy to some foods. The most common foods causing this are tomatoes, nuts, milk, caffeine, alcohol, spices and sugar substitutes, especially Sorbitol, Zolotol, and Saccharin. **Soluble** fiber helps form gel in the stool making it more formed.

Examples of **soluble fiber**:

- psyllium (Metamucil), oatmeal, barley, rye, beans such as kidney, garbanzo, lentils and split peas, oranges, fruits including apples and pears.
- Excessive caffeine intake should be avoided. If you feel you have food sensitivities, you should see a registered dietitian for proper management.

**Soluble fibre helps to:**

- Lower blood cholesterol levels. Aim for at least 10 grams of soluble fibre every day.
- Control blood glucose (sugar) levels. This is helpful if you have diabetes or if you sometimes get a low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia)
- Manage diarrhea and loose stools
- Reduce some of the symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Reduce the risk of getting intestinal ulcers
- Have a healthier colon by increasing the amount of healthy bacteria.



## GOOD SOURCES OF FIBRE

The following fiber sources are specifically ranked for fiber content. The "A" category is the highest, with over 7 grams per serving. "B" is next with 3 or more. And "C" foods have less than 3 grams

The list of high fiber foods below can help you reduce your risk of constipation, hemorrhoids, high cholesterol, high blood sugar, obesity, colon cancer, diabetes and heart disease

Most people only get about 10 grams of fiber a day. That's not nearly enough. You need **25 to 35 grams of fiber a day** for optimum health.

Please use the following list to assist you.

### High Fiber Food Chart

#### Category A (more than 7 grams per serving)

FOOD	AMOUNT	TOTAL FIBER (grams)
Avocado	1 medium	11.84
Barley	½ cup	15.
Black beans, cooked	1 cup	14.92
Bran cereal	1 cup	19.94
Broccoli, cooked	1 cup	4.50
Green peas, cooked	1 cup	8.84
Kale, cooked	1 cup	7.20
Kidney beans, cooked	1 cup	13.33
Lentils, cooked	1 cup	15.64
Lima beans, cooked	1 cup	13.16
Navy beans, cooked	1 cup	11.65
Oats, dry	1 cup	12.00
Pinto beans, cooked	1 cup	14.71

Split peas, cooked	1 cup	16.27
Raspberries	1 cup	8.34
Rice, brown, uncooked	1 cup	7.98
Soybeans, cooked	1 cup	7.62

**Category B (more than 3 grams per serving)**

<b>FOOD</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>TOTAL FIBER (grams)</b>
Almonds	1 oz.	4.22
Apple, w/ skin	1 medium	5.00
Banana	1 medium	3.92
Blueberries	1 cup	4.18
Cabbage, cooked	1 cup	4.20
Cauliflower, cooked	1 cup	3.43
Corn, sweet	1 cup	4.66
Figs, dried	2 medium	3.74
Flax seeds	3 tsp.	6.97
Garbanzo beans, cooked	1 cup	5.80
Grapefruit	1/2 medium	6.12
Green beans, cooked	1 cup	3.95
Olives	1 cup	4.30
Oranges, navel	1 medium	3.40
Papaya	1 each	5.47
Pasta, whole wheat	1 cup	6.34
Peach, dried	3 pcs.	3.18
Pear with skin	1 medium	5.08
Pistachio nuts	1 oz.	3.10
Potato, baked w/ skin	1 medium	4.80
Prunes	1/4 cup	3.02
Pumpkin seeds	1/4 cup	4.12
Sesame seeds	1/4 cup	4.32
Spinach, cooked	1 cup	3.98

Strawberries	1 cup	
Sweet potato, cooked	1 cup	3.68
Swiss chard, cooked	1 cup	5.04
Wheat germ	1 oz.	4.05
Winter squash	1 cup	5.74
Yam, cooked cubes	1 cup	5.30

**Category C (less than 3 grams per serving)**

<b>FOOD</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>TOTAL FIBER (grams)</b>
Apricots	3 medium	0.98
Apricots, dried	5 pieces	2.89
Asparagus, cooked	1 cup	2.88
Beets, cooked	1 cup	2.85
Bread: whole wheat	1 slice	2.00
Brussels sprouts, cooked	1 cup	2.84
Cantaloupe, cubes	1 cup	1.28
Carrots, raw	1 medium	2.00
Cashews	1 oz.	1.00
Celery	1 stalk	1.02
Cherries	½ cup	0.56
Collard greens, cooked	1 cup	2.58
Cranberries	1/2 cup	1.99
Cucumber, sliced w/ peel	1 cup	0.83
Eggplant, cooked cubes	1 cup	2.48
Grapes	½ cup	0.56
Kiwifruit	1 each	2.58
Mushrooms, raw	1 cup	1.36
Mustard greens, cooked	1 cup	2.80
Onions, raw	1 cup	2.88
Peanuts	1 oz.	2.30
Peach	1 medium	2.00

Peppers, sweet	1 cup	2.62
Pineapple	1 cup	1.86
Plum	1 medium	1.00
Popcorn ( popped)	½ cup	0.53
Raisins	1.5 oz box	1.60
Rice (white)	½ cup	1.42
Romaine lettuce	1 cup	0.95
Summer squash, cooked	1 cup	2.52
Sunflower seeds	1/4 cup	3.00
Tomato	1 medium	1.00
Walnuts	1 oz.	2.98
Watermelon	1 slice	1.93
Wax beans (yellow)	1 cup	3.78
Zucchini, cooked	1 cup	2.63

(The fiber count for most packaged foods can be found on the label.)