
Progressive Surgical Associates

High Fiber Diet

Fiber (roughage) is the undigestible matter in plant foods. Although not digested, fiber is a highly important element necessary in our diets, and unfortunately one of the most neglected dietary components.

A high fiber diet is essential in the prevention of many conditions including constipation, hemorrhoids, colon polyps, colon cancer, diverticulitis, diverticulosis, and high cholesterol. The average American diet is woefully shy of the 20 to 35 grams of fiber recommend daily by The American Dietetic Association.

Fiber helps keep stools soft and allows the bowel contents to pass more easily. Fiber is the most useful when it is accompanied with intake of additional water, so make sure to drink at least 6-8 glasses of water daily.

Adding fiber to your diet is best done on a gradual basis to minimize the discomfort of gas or bloating. As tolerated, you may work your way up to the recommended 20 to 35 grams of fiber by adding these high-fiber foods to your diet:

Food Item	Serving Size	Amount of Fiber (grams)
Fruits		
Apple	1 medium	4 grams
Peach	1 medium	2 grams
Pear	1 medium	4 grams
Tangerine	1 medium	2 grams
Vegetables		
Acorn squash, fresh, cooked	¾ cup	7 grams
Asparagus, fresh, cooked	½ cup	1.5 grams
Broccoli, fresh, cooked	½ cups	2 grams
Brussel sprouts, fresh cooked	½ cup	2 grams
Cabbage, fresh, cooked	½ cup	2 grams
Carrot, fresh, cooked	1 cup	1.5 grams
Cauliflower, fresh, cooked	½ cup	2 grams
Romaine lettuce	1 cup	1 gram
Spinach, fresh, cooked	½ cup	2 grams
Tomato, raw	1 cup	1 gram
Zucchini, fresh, cooked	1 cup	2.5 grams
Starchy Vegetables		
Black-eyed peas, fresh, cooked	½ cup	4 grams
Lima beans, fresh, cooked	½ cup	4.5 grams
Kidney beans, fresh, cooked	½ cup	6 grams
Potato, fresh, cooked	1 cup	3 grams
Grains		
Bread, whole-wheat	1 slice	2 grams
Brown rice, cooked	1 cup	3.5 grams
Cereal, bran flake	¾ cup	5 grams
Oatmeal, plain, cooked	¾ cup	3 grams
White rice, cooked	1 cup	1 gram

Your physician may also recommend taking a fiber supplement such as Metamucil, Citrucel, or Konsyl. These are powders that may be mixed with water and provide 2-3.5 grams of fiber per tablespoon serving.