High-Fiber Foods

Fiber is in many kinds of foods, like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Eating enough fiber may help your child have soft, pain-free, and regular bowel movements.

What is fiber?
Fiber is the part of plant foods that does not break down or get absorbed when it is eaten. Because foods high in fiber do not break down, they:

- Add bulk (attach to poop and keep it formed)
- Absorb water (keeps poop moist, soft, and easier to push out)

How much fiber does my child need?
The amount of total fiber your child needs per day depends on their age, gender, and medical conditions. You will know your child is getting about the right amount of fiber when their bowel movements are soft, well-formed, and do not cause pain.

Use the chart below to estimate how much fiber your child should try to eat each day. Serving high-fiber foods with most of your child’s meals and snacks will help them to reach the total recommended.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Amount fiber per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 years old</td>
<td>19 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8 years old</td>
<td>25 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males, 9-13 years old</td>
<td>31 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females, 9-13 years old</td>
<td>26 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males, 14-18 years old</td>
<td>38 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females, 14-18 years old</td>
<td>26 grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When adding fiber to your child’s diet, do so gradually so their body can adjust. If your child has gas, bloating, loose stools, or abdominal pain, this could be a sign of too much fiber. Contact your child’s doctor or dietitian if this is a concern.

To Learn More
- Nutrition
  206-987-4758
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services
- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

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## How much water does my child need?

When adding high fiber foods to your child's diet it is important they drink enough liquids. Fiber absorbs water, which helps make poop soft.

Ask your child’s doctor or dietitian how much your child needs to drink each day.

Encourage sips throughout the day. Make drinks fun by using special cups, straws or by adding sparkling water or club soda to make them fizzy. Your child can also get liquids in other forms such as frozen fruit ices, Popsicles, milkshakes, smoothies, soups and fruit like melon.

## High-fiber foods

Fiber is in vegetables, fruits, bran, whole grains, beans, lentils, nuts and seeds. The following foods are high-fiber foods. Check Nutrition Facts food labels for actual grams of fiber per serving.

### Grains, cereals and pastas
- Whole grain crackers, tortillas, rolls or naan
- Whole wheat pasta and bread
- Cracked wheat bread
- Cornbread
- Brown rice, red rice, or black rice
- Steel-cut oatmeal or rolled oats
- Millet
- Barley
- Rye bread and crackers
- Popcorn
- Quinoa
- Teff (injera)
- Bran cereals or muffins
- Cereals with 3 or more grams of fiber in each serving like: Fiber One, Bran, Corn Bran Crunch, Cracklin Oat Bran, Granola, Shredded Wheat, Raisin Nut Bran, Raisin Bran, Grape Nuts, Kashi, or All Bran

### Vegetables
- Artichokes
- Beets
- Peppers and bell peppers
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Carrots and baby carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Corn (canned corn or corn on the cob)
- Green beans, peas, snow peas or snap peas
- Lettuce, spinach, bok choy, or shredded cabbage
- Mushrooms
- Squash
- Tomatoes
- Yams or potatoes baked with skin
High-Fiber Foods

Fruits

- Apples
- Cantaloupe
- Cherries
- Dried figs, prunes, and dates
- Grapes
- Mango
- Oranges and grapefruits
- Peaches
- Pears
- Pineapple
- Plums
- Raisins, cranberries, and dried cranberries
- Strawberries and other berries
- Juices with pulp

Legumes, nuts and seeds

- Almonds
- Beans or lentils (dried or canned)
- Pistachios
- Split peas
- Cashews
- Walnuts
- Chia seeds
- Pecans
- Flax seeds
- Sunflower seeds
- Pumpkin seeds
- Hazelnuts/filberts

Tips for adding fiber

Cook and bake with high-fiber foods

- Try whole grains such as brown rice, bulgur wheat, barley and whole wheat pasta. Use these in soups or casseroles.
- If children prefer white rice, mix brown and white together.
- Use dried beans, peas and lentils in main dishes, soups and chili.
- Make homemade soups from dried peas, barley and lots of vegetables.
- Prepare desserts like cookies, cakes, pies and bars using dried fruits, nuts, and oats, and use whole wheat flour for half of the flour.
- Use a whole grain or high-fiber cookbook.
Eat high-fiber snacks and lunches

- Use whole wheat bread for sandwiches and add lettuce, spinach, onion, and tomato.
- Cut up raw vegetables for snacking and dipping in ranch dressing, hummus, peanut butter, or any favorite dip.
- Try baked potato skins or baked sweet potato fries.
- Use whole wheat crackers for snacks. Spread them with peanut butter, cream cheese, or other spreads, or serve with cheese.
- Offer whole fruits instead of fruit juice. Cut into easy pieces.

Use bran

- Substitute up to half of the white or wheat flour in recipes with bran flour. For example, use bran flour for half of the crust and toppings for quiche and desserts such as apple crisp and fruit pies.
- Add one-half teaspoon of unprocessed wheat bran to cooked cereal, casseroles, thick soups, stew, or smoothies.
- Soak All Bran cereal in milk and keep in the refrigerator. It can be added to applesauce, other fruits, and yogurt.
- Use one-part bran flour when coating meat for baking or frying.
- Add up to 3/4 of a cup of 100% bran cereal to each pound of ground beef (or other meat) used for meatloaf, meatballs and patties. Increase liquid ingredients by two or more tablespoons and soften cereal in the liquid for two minutes before adding to ground meat.
- Be creative and start with small amounts. Too much bran will make a recipe dry and crumbly, and the bran flavor may be too strong.

Healthful high-fiber snack ideas

- Veggies and hummus
- Oatmeal raisin walnut cookies & fruit
- Granola & yogurt with fruit
- Whole grain cereal with milk
- Whole wheat crackers & peanut butter
- Celery stuffed with peanut butter
- Zucchini bread & fruit
- Barley & vegetable soup
- Bean salad
- Popcorn with parmesan cheese
- Trail mix
- Bean chili with cornbread
- Whole grain cereal bars or granola bars and fruit
- Homemade fruit and/or vegetable smoothies with flaxseed
- Tortilla chips with guacamole
- Whole wheat tortilla with peanut butter and banana
Recipe for high-fiber apple crisp

Ingredients

- 3 large apples, unpeeled, cored and sliced thin
- 1/4 cup raisins (optional)
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup rolled oats (regular or quick)
- 1/2 cup walnuts (optional)
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine the apples, raisins, sugar, cinnamon and 1 tablespoon of the flour. Stir well to coat the apples with dry ingredients. Transfer mixture to a greased, shallow baking dish.
2. In the same bowl, combine the remaining flour, oats, and nuts. Stir in the melted butter and mix the ingredients well (it should be crumbly). Sprinkle the oat mixture over the fruit mixture.
3. Bake the crisp in a preheated 375-degree oven for 40 minutes or until the crisp is lightly browned. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Recipe makes 8 servings with 3 grams of fiber per serving.