



WHY FIBER? FOR PARENTS

Support and Promote the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*

Did you know that most American adults and children eat only half the recommended amount of dietary fiber every day?

Fiber is needed by adults and children for good health.

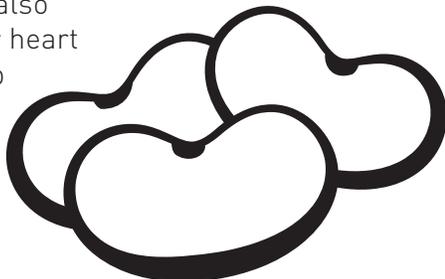
The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* and the USDA Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs recommend that schools serve and offer foods that are good sources of fiber to students daily. Many schools are now offering more whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes to increase the fiber in students' diets.

Make sure your children are eating plenty of high-fiber foods for long-lasting health benefits.

WHAT FIBER DOES IN THE BODY

There are two kinds of fiber, soluble and insoluble. Both kinds are good for you and are needed by the body to work its best. You can find both soluble and insoluble fiber in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. If you eat the recommended amount of these foods you will get enough of both kinds of fiber.

Fiber helps push food along in your digestive system and helps keep your colon clean and working like it should. Eating enough fiber also reduces your risk for heart disease and can help keep your blood sugar stable.



An added benefit of eating enough fiber is that fiber helps you feel full without adding extra calories. High-fiber foods take longer to digest and keep you feeling fuller, longer. This may help people eat less, lose weight or maintain a healthy weight.

Eating fiber every day is important!

How Much Fiber?

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommend a dietary fiber intake of 14 grams per 1000 calories per day. For the average adult or child, this translates to about 20-35 grams of dietary fiber every day.

WHERE'S THE FIBER?

Foods that have the highest amount of fiber are fiber-rich fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans. A “good source” of fiber provides between 3-5 grams of fiber, and a “high fiber” source contains 5 grams or more.

WAYS TO GET KIDS TO EAT MORE FIBER?

There are lots of ways you can boost the fiber in the meals and snacks your child eats. Try these suggestions:

- **Choose whole grains.** Buy bread, pasta, crackers, and rice and cereal that are whole grain. Read food labels and make sure a whole grain is listed first on the ingredient list.
- **Add dried fruit to salads.** Toss dried fruits like raisins, prunes, or dried cherries or apricots into mixed lettuce for salads, or add to fresh fruit salads for added texture and sweetness.
- **Serve fruits and vegetables with the peel.** There's a lot of fiber in the peel and skin of fruits and vegetables. Be sure to wash them before eating them. You may want to cut fruits and vegetables into small pieces if you're serving them to younger children.
- **Replace high fat dips with hummus.** Hummus is made from beans and is loaded with fiber. Serve hummus with fresh crisp veggies such as carrots, celery or zucchini sticks, or 100% whole grain crackers.

SUPER-FIBER FOODS

FOOD	SERVING	GRAMS OF FIBER
Raspberries	1 cup	8.0
Pear	1	5.5
Apple	1	4.4
Banana	1	3.1
Whole wheat spaghetti	1 cup cooked	6.2
Popcorn	3 cups popped	3.5
Oatmeal	1 cup cooked	4.0
Brown rice	1 cup cooked	3.5
Cooked lentils	1 cup	15.6
Black beans	1 cup	15.0
Baked beans	1 cup	10.4
Almonds	22 nuts	3.5
Peas	1 cup	8.8
Broccoli	1 cup	5.1
Turnip greens	1 cup boiled	5.0
Corn	1 cup	4.2
Baked potato with skin	1	2.9

- **Get creative with beans.** Sprinkle kidney or garbanzo beans on salads, puree white beans and use them to thicken soups, add black or pinto beans to cooked Spanish rice, stir any bean into spaghetti sauce or choose main dishes that showcase beans such as burritos or bean soup.
- **Make smoothies.** Blend a little honey together with fat-free milk or yogurt and frozen fruit such as strawberries, blueberries, peaches, banana, mango, pineapple—whatever you have and like!