Renal Dietitians
a dietetic practice group of the
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



Facts on Fiber for CKD

What is fiber? What are good sources? How much fiber should I eat in a day?

Fiber is a type of carbohydrate. It is found in plant foods like beans, grains, fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Studies show that most people don't eat enough fiber. Women should aim for about 25 grams of fiber per day while men should aim for 38 grams per day.

How is fiber good for me?

Fiber can't be broken down by the body, but it has many benefits. It helps to:

- improve blood sugar spikes by slowing the digestion of food
- reduce the risk of heart disease and lower cholesterol by removing it from the body
- promote a feeling of fullness which reduces overeating and helps with weight control
- regulate bowel movements by increasing stool frequency

High-Fiber Foods

Fruits:
Apples
Berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries)
Pears
Peaches
Plums
Pineapple

Vegetables:
Green beans
Broccoli
Carrots
Cauliflower
Cabbage
Summer squash

Whole Grains:
Oats
Whole wheat bread, cereal, pasta, crackers
Brown rice
Barley
Popcorn
Quinoa
Shredded wheat
Bran

Nuts and Seeds:
Walnuts
Almonds
Cashews
Flax seed
Chia seeds
Pumpkin seeds
Sunflower seeds
Pecans
Peanuts

Legumes:
Black beans
Chickpeas
Edamame
Pinto beans
Cannellini beans
Lentils

Some high-fiber foods may need to be limited due to potassium restriction.

Questions about Fiber

Can I eat whole grains, nuts, and beans since they contain phosphorus and potassium?

Phosphorus
Phosphorus in plant foods is bound to fiber, so the body absorbs less. Nuts, beans, and whole grains have less phosphorus than meat, dairy, and processed foods. Swap processed foods for high-fiber items to improve phosphorus levels.

Potassium
Whole grains, beans, nuts, and fruits and vegetables contain potassium in varying amounts. They can still be included in a kidney-friendly diet. These foods help your body manage potassium in different ways, including:

- more frequent bowel movements as potassium is eliminated in stool
- lower blood sugar, which helps to lower potassium levels in the blood
- lower acid levels in the blood, which helps balance potassium

I am on a fluid restriction. Do I need to worry about high-fiber foods?

- Plant foods like fruits and vegetables contain fluids but do not need to be counted in your fluid restriction. Eating more of these foods and following a low-sodium diet may help you to manage fluids.
- High-fiber foods create bulk in the stool, and fluid is needed to move stool through the digestive system. Talk to your RDN about your unique needs for balancing fluids and fiber!





Quick Tips for Adding Fiber

Adding extra fiber to your diet doesn't have to be hard! Fill at least half of your plate with fruits and vegetables at each meal. Choose whole grains when you can. Use these tips, and you will reach your fiber goals in no time!

Summary of Key Points

- Fiber is found in all plant foods (e.g., whole grains, nuts, legumes, fruits, and vegetables).
- Fiber has many benefits, such as managing blood sugar, promoting fullness and a healthy weight, increasing bowel movements, and lowering cholesterol!
- High-fiber plant foods are part of a healthy kidney diet. Talk with your health care team and RDN to find out which high-fiber foods are best for you.

High-fiber foods I plan to eat:

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