

**South Warwickshire**



NHS Foundation Trust

## **Warwickshire Dietetic Service**

### **Increasing the amount of fibre in your diet**

This information can be given out by dietitians, doctors and practice nurses. It provides information on how to increase dietary fibre intake for conditions such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (constipation predominant), constipation, Diverticular Disease and high cholesterol.

### What is Dietary Fibre?

Fibre, or roughage, is found in plant foods. It is not digested by the body so this makes it important for bowel health. Fibre does not provide any calories, minerals or vitamins, but is important as part of a balanced diet. There are two types: **soluble** and **insoluble**.

### Why should I eat fibre?

Eating high fibre foods can help to protect against diverticulitis, irritable bowel syndrome, haemorrhoids and bowel cancer.

High fibre foods are generally low in calories and help to make you feel full. They can therefore help to reduce the amount you eat if you are trying to lose weight.

Fibre promotes the growth of 'good' bacteria in your bowels.

Fibre adds bulk to and softens your stool by holding water. This can help to prevent and relieve constipation.

### Insoluble fibre

This type of fibre passes through your gut mostly unchanged, absorbing water and adding bulk. It helps other food and waste products move more easily. It is tough and fibrous and is found in the stalks, skins and leaves of vegetables and the outer coating of grains. Good sources of insoluble fibre are wholegrain bread, wholegrain cereals, wheat bran, skins, pips and seeds.

### Soluble Fibre

Soluble fibre is found inside fruit, vegetables, pulses (e.g. kidney beans, baked beans, lentils) and some grains such as oats and barley. Soluble fibre forms a gel when mixed with liquid. Your natural gut bacteria feed and multiply on it giving softer, bulkier stools. Soluble fibre can also help to reduce your risk of heart disease by reducing cholesterol in your blood.

Fruits and vegetables usually contain a mixture of soluble and insoluble fibre. Aim for 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day (refer to page 4 for portion sizes).

### How much fibre should I eat?

The recommended daily amount for adults is 18 grams per day. Children will require less. For children over 2 years: age in years plus 5g e.g. for a five year old 10g fibre per day. Pre-packed foods should all state the amount of fibre they contain on the label.

Foods containing 3g fibre or more per 100g can be classed as a good source of fibre. A sudden increase in fibre may cause discomfort (wind and bloating), so increase the fibre in your diet gradually.

### Fluids

Make sure you drink more fluids as you increase the amount of fibre you have, as fibre absorbs fluid. Try to drink 8-10 glasses a day. This can include water, squash, fruit or herbal tea, juice, tea and coffee but alcohol does not count.

## Increasing the amount of fibre in your diet

### How can I increase the amount of fibre I eat?

Low fibre food	Portion & amount of fibre (g)	High fibre alternatives	Portion & amount of fibre (g)
White bread	1 medium slice/ 1.0	Wholemeal bread Wholemeal rolls Wholemeal flour Wholemeal pitta bread High fibre crackers Rye bread	1 medium slice/ 2-4 1 roll/3-4 100g/9.0 1 pitta/3-4 1 cracker/1.0 1 slice/2.0
White rice white pasta Potatoes, peeled	100g cooked/0-1 75g uncooked/1-3 Medium(100g)/1-2	Brown rice Wholegrain pasta Potatoes with their skins on e.g. jacket potatoes, new potatoes <u>High fibre cereals</u> e.g. Branflakes, Porridge oats, muesli, Weetabix, Oat cakes Chapattis made with wholemeal flour	100g cooked/2-4 75g uncooked/6-7 100g/2.5
<u>Cereals</u> Rice-based corn-based	50g portion/0-0.5 50g portion/0-1.5		50g portion/5-8 30g(uncooked)/2-4 50g/4-5 1 biscuit/2.0 1 biscuit/1.0 1 chapatti/2-3
Tinned fruit & skinless fruit	100g serving/0-1.0	Whole fruit with skin	100g portion/2-4
Peeled and well cooked vegetables	3tbsp/1-2	Peas, sweetcorn, baked beans, cucumber, whole tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli, carrots, green beans, spinach and salad	3 tbsp/2-3
Meat, fish and substitutes		Any dishes with seeds, beans, vegetables, peas, lentils or nuts added	
Dairy produce		Yoghurt containing fruit, nuts or muesli	
Drinks		Smoothies made from whole fruit, not juice, fruit juice with 'bits'	
Miscellaneous		Whole vegetable soup Jam and marmalade with pips and rind	

## Increasing the amount of fibre in your diet

### Fruits and vegetables: What counts as a portion?

Food type	Examples of one portion – equivalent to 80g
Large fruit	½ grapefruit, a slice of papaya, a slice of melon
Medium fruit	One apple, banana, orange, pear
Small fruit	Two plums, satsumas or kiwi
Dried fruit	1 tablespoon
Fruit juice or smoothie	One glass of 100% juice
Cooked, frozen or tinned vegetables	3 heaped tablespoons
Pulses and beans	3 heaped tablespoons

### Further tips for increasing your fibre

1. Gradually increase the fibre in your diet. Make one change at a time and let your body adjust before making any other changes
2. Eating regular meals will help you to develop a more regular bowel habit.
3. Keep active – exercise helps food to move through your bowels.

It is not recommended to add additional bran to your food, as it reduces the absorption of some minerals such as iron, zinc and calcium.

## Increasing the amount of fibre in your diet

### Meal Ideas with more fibre

#### Breakfast

- Choose wholegrain cereal with chopped or dried fruit
- Baked beans on wholemeal or granary toast
- Use wholemeal bread topped with fruit e.g banana
- Have yoghurt with a large helping of fresh or dried fruits

#### Light meals

- Use wholemeal, granary, rye bread or wholemeal pitta bread to make sandwiches
- Add salad to sandwiches or jacket potatoes
- Have baked beans with jacket potatoes or on toast
- Add pulses e.g. beans, lentils, chick peas or whole wheat pasta to soups
- Vegetable soup
- Crackers or oat cakes with hummus and salad

#### Main meals

- Add pulses to stews, casseroles and curries
- Keep the skin on your vegetables and potatoes
- Add vegetables to all meat and poultry dishes
- Use wholewheat pasta and brown rice instead of white

#### Dessert

- Add chopped fruit to sugar free jelly or puddings or yoghurts
- Rice pudding or custard mixed with stewed, fresh or dried fruit
- Fresh fruit salad
- Fruit crumble made with wholemeal breadcrumbs, oats and chopped nuts or use wholemeal flour

#### Snacks

- A piece of fresh fruit
- Wholemeal toast with tomato
- Carrot or celery sticks
- Whole wheat or rye crispbreads or crackers or oat cakes
- Mixed dried fruit, seeds and nuts

## **PALS**

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for patients and their families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by direct telephone line on 01926 600054 or using the phone links which are available in both hospitals or calling in at the office located in the main entrance at Warwick Hospital.

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print – please contact our PALS office.

As a key provider of healthcare and as an employer, the Trust has a statutory obligation to promote and respect equality and human rights. This is set out in various pieces of legislation including: Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act (2005), Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and Age Discrimination Act (2006)

### **If you have any queries about your diet, please contact us:**

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