

FOCUS ON FIBER!

What is fiber?

Fiber is a type of carbohydrate found in plant foods that cannot be digested or broken down by the human body. This is actually a good thing as the undigestible substance can help our bodies in so many ways! Fiber is not found in any foods that come from animal sources such as meats or dairy products.

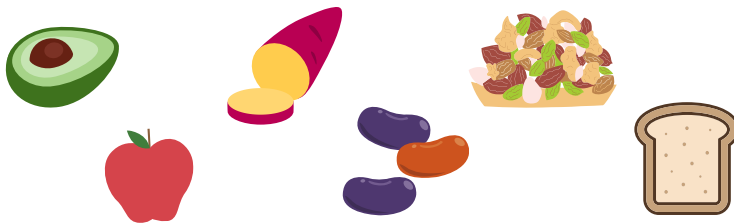
How does fiber benefit our bodies?

- Fiber improves digestion which can help prevent constipation and keep you regular.
- Eating fiber keeps you fuller for longer, that way you don't get hungry as often and overeat.
- Fibrous foods help lower cholesterol and improve heart health .
 - Fiber can help control blood sugar levels.

What foods are high in fiber?

Fiber is found in the following plant foods:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Beans
- Nuts & Seeds
- Whole Grains (brown rice, whole wheat bread/crackers, popcorn)



How much fiber do we need everyday?

Most adults need at least **25 grams of fiber daily**. This recommendation can be met by the following tips:

- Aim for 3 servings of whole grains daily.
- Eat beans 2-3x per week.
- Eat whole fruits and vegetables with the skin on.
- Choose pre-packed foods that have at least 2 g of fiber per serving.

Material for this article was sourced from Just Say Yes to Fruits & Vegetables, Lesson 5: Fiber

Recipe of the Month: Veggie Quesadillas



Ingredients:

- Cooking oil spray
- 1 small zucchini (chopped)
- 1/2 broccoli head (chopped)
- 1 green bell pepper (chopped)
- 1 onion (peeled and chopped)
- 1 carrot (shredded)
- 4 whole wheat tortillas (10-inch)
- 1 C cheddar cheese (shredded low-fat)
- 1/2 C salsa

Directions

1. Spray pan with cooking oil spray.
2. Cook vegetables on medium heat for 4-5 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from pan.
3. Spray pan with cooking spray. Place tortilla in the pan. Sprinkle with half the vegetables and half of the cheese.
4. Place the other tortilla on top. Cook on medium heat for 4-6 minutes or until the cheese starts to melt and the bottom tortilla starts to brown.
5. Flip quesadilla. Cook for 4 minutes or until tortilla browns.
6. Repeat steps 3-5.
7. Cut each quesadilla in half. Serve with salsa.

Recipe Source: Maryland Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program, myplategov.

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