

# Fiber for Health

**MAINTAINING REGULARITY IS ONLY ONE OF FIBER'S MANY CRUCIAL FUNCTIONS.**

CATEGORY	TYPES INCLUDE*	WHAT IT DOES
<b>Insoluble</b>	Cellulose, Hemicellulose, Lignin	Traditionally known as roughage, this type of fiber does not dissolve in water, instead helping to retain water within the colon. By passing through the digestive tract mostly intact, insoluble fiber is able to speed the passage of food and waste; this action improves gut transit time and eases constipation.
<b>Soluble</b>	Beta-Glucan, Gum, Mucilage, Pectin	Soluble fiber dissolves in water, forming a gel within the intestines that delays stomach emptying. This action may help control weight gain by causing the body to feel full. Soluble fiber can also help control insulin activity, which supports healthy blood glucose levels, as well as lower LDL ("bad" cholesterol) levels.
<b>Prebiotic</b>	FOS, Fructan, GOS, Gum, Inulin, Oligofructose	Prebiotic fibers support and stimulate the activity and growth of healthy probiotic bacteria within the intestines. Research has shown beneficial effects on mineral absorption, symptom reduction in inflammatory bowel disorders, intestinal regularity and other health measures.
<b>Immune-Supporting</b>	Arabinogalactan, Pectin	As the main site of absorption within the body, it is important to keep the intestinal tract healthy and safe from pathogens—the digestive system serves the "front lines" of the immune system. Fiber types in this category promote a healthy, well-regulated intestinal tract, which improves and strengthens immune response.

\* Not all possible types listed; fibers in prebiotic and immune-supporting categories can be either soluble or insoluble.

For years, fiber was a ho-hum kind of subject among people interested in nutrition: Important to keep one's bowels happy, sure, but not much more than that. Then it was discovered that some fibers formed a cholesterol-controlling gel within the intestines and the research community took another look at this humblest of substances.

Now scientists realize that certain kinds of fiber—a term for any food component not digested and absorbed into the bloodstream—play key roles in maintaining not only

intestinal health but also the well-being of the immune system by supporting healthy gut flora, the millions of microbes living within the digestive tract that promote proper digestion. This makes fiber a subject of interest among researchers and health-minded laypeople alike.

This chart presents information on how each class of fiber supports well-being along with some good sources. Most sources provide more than one kind; for example, apples are listed as a source of soluble fiber but supply the insoluble type as well.

## GOOD SOURCES

Beet, Bell Peppers, Cabbage, Fenugreek, Lettuce, Raspberry, Rice Bran, Turnip, Wheat Bran

Acacia Gum, Açai, Apples, Beans (dried), Brussels Sprouts, Flax Seed, Marshmallow Root, Oat Bran, Psyllium, Pumpkin, Slippery Elm

*A. Pullulans*, Burdock Root, Chicory Root, Prune Powder

Apple Pectin, Citrus Pectin, Larch



**NOTE:** Always consult with your healthcare practitioner for help in designing a supplementation program, especially if you have a pre-existing condition.