

Soluble Fiber

What is soluble fiber?

Fiber is a type of carbohydrate that the body can't digest (break down). Fiber comes in 2 main forms: soluble and insoluble.

- **Soluble fiber** dissolves in water and forms a gel in your digestive tract, which slows down food that passes through it. These fibers help support good bacteria in the colon. Soluble fiber also helps manage blood sugar and control cholesterol levels. Soluble fiber is helpful for both constipation and diarrhea.
- **Insoluble fiber** does not dissolve in water and is less likely to break down, so it passes through your digestive tract more quickly and helps you with constipation.

Both types of fiber are good, but your body's ability to tolerate certain forms of fiber can change with time. Eating soluble fiber may be especially helpful for those with loose stool (poop) or diarrhea. While many foods with fiber have both soluble and insoluble fiber, here is a table listing good sources of soluble fiber:

Fruits	Vegetables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples (peeled, baked, or applesauce) • Apricots (ripe) • Avocado • Bananas • Canned peaches or mandarins • Cantaloupe • Citrus like oranges, grapefruits, etc. (without the thin white skin) 	<p>Cook these vegetables until they are "fork-tender" (soft enough to be cut with a fork):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asparagus (eat the tips only) • Bok choy • Carrots • Eggplant (without the skin) • Green beans • Parsnips (without the skin)

Fruits	Vegetables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honeydew • Mango (ripe) • Papaya • Peaches, nectarines, or plums (without the skin) • Pear (without the skin) • Watermelon (without seeds) • Fruits juices in small amounts (watered down, without pulp) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potato (without the skin) • Sweet potato (without the skin) • Yellow squash (without the seeds) <p>Eat these vegetables raw:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arugula • Bibb, butterleaf, or Boston lettuce • Persian cucumber or cucumber (peeled) • Jicama • Onion • Zucchini (peeled)
Grains	Proteins
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breads, including white bread, sourdough, English muffins, bagels, pancakes, plain pita, and waffles • Cereals, including rice-based cereals, corn flake cereal, cream of wheat, cream of rice, and creamed buckwheat • White crackers, such as saltines, pretzels, and rice cakes • Grits • Instant oats • Pasta • Rice, including white rice, cream of rice, and rice noodles 	<p>Nuts and seeds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nut butters like peanut, almond, cashew, etc. • Nut flours like almond, coconut, etc. <p>Plant proteins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm tofu • Seitan • Pureed (blended) beans, including hummus, bean dips, and pureed soups <p>Animal proteins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eggs • Meat, poultry, and fish (soft-cooked or ground) <p>Dairy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lactose-free dairy products may be better if you are having diarrhea.

What are some soluble fiber-focused meal and snack ideas?

Breakfast

- Instant oatmeal with a peeled apple and nut butter
- Yogurt parfait with sliced banana and a handful of oat-based cereal or puffed rice cereal (you can use dairy-free or lactose-free yogurt if needed)
- Avocado with eggs and sourdough bread

Lunch and dinner

- Grilled chicken with green beans and peeled sweet potato
- Baked salmon with mango-avocado salsa and rice
- Roasted chicken with mashed potatoes and carrots
- Tofu stir fry with cooked bok choy, onion, and peeled zucchini served over rice noodles
- Tuna salad on plain pita with peeled pear and peeled cucumber

Snacks

- Applesauce or a fruit pouch
- Hard-boiled egg
- Nut butter on a rice cake or sourdough bread
- Carrots with hummus

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by University of Michigan (U-M) Health for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by U-M Health and for which U-M Health does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition, or your treatment plan.

Author: Amanda Lynett, MS RDN

Reviewer: Emily Haller, MS RDN, Megan Ponke, MS RDN, Julie Bouwman, RDN, Kate Pelletier, MPH RDN

Edited by: Brittany Batell, MPH MSW

Patient Education by [U-M Health](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International Public License](#). Last revised 02/2024