

Dietitians New Zealand | Ngā Pūkenga Kai Ora o Aotearoa

EMPOWERING KIWIS  
TO EAT WELL

INFORMATION *for people*  
and *whānau* with DIABETES

BASIC GENERAL  
FIBRE

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# FIBRE

## What is fibre?

Fibre is the partially or non-digestible component in a wide variety of foods, such as grains, vegetables, fruit, legumes, nuts and seeds. It provides numerous benefits as it passes through the digestive system.

## Benefits of eating fibre:

- Lowers cholesterol levels
- Keeps your bowel habits regular and prevents constipation
- Reduces your risk of bowel cancer and heart disease
- Lowers postprandial blood glucose levels
- Keeps you full and satisfied (which may help with weight management)

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## How much fibre do we need?

Most people do not eat enough fibre. Aim for **25-30 grams** of fibre each day<sup>1</sup>. Increase fibre intake slowly to avoid an upset stomach.

Foods high in fibre include:

Food Item	Fibre (g) <sup>1</sup>
1 cup frozen mixed vegetables	8.6
½ cup baked beans	8.2
½ cup stewed apricots	7
½ cup muesli	6.5
1 bran muffin	6
2 Weetbix	4.8
1 cup brown rice	3.7
1 slice wholemeal bread	3.2
1 kumara	2.8
Dried apricots (10 halves)	2.7
1 slice wholegrain bread	2.6
2 slices white high-fibre	2.6
1 cup porridge	2.1
1 apple or banana	2
2 slices white bread	1.6

<sup>1</sup> Nutrition Foundation, 2022

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# Simple suggestions to boost fibre intake

## 1. Choose wholegrain breads and cereals

- Breads – Choose brown bread over white bread, e.g. wholegrain, mixed grain, wholemeal, soy and linseed, rye, pumpnickel
- Cereals – Porridge, Rolled oats, Weet-Bix, All-Bran, Natural untoasted muesli, Bran Flakes
- Baking you could also substitute half of the white flour with wholemeal flour.

## 2. Eat 2-4 servings of fruit and 5 servings of vegetables each day

- A serving is the amount that fits into your cupped hand
- Choose whole fruit and vegetables rather than fruit juice
- Leave the skin on as this contains most of the fibre

## 3. Eat legumes

- Try adding legumes (e.g. lentils, chickpeas, split peas, dried peas, and beans) to meat dishes, soups, and casseroles

## 4. Read food labels to check fibre amounts

High fibre = more than 6 grams (g) per 100g

	Per serve	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	444	1480
(Cal)	106	353
Protein (g)	3.6	12
Fat (g)	0.4	1.4
Saturated Fat (g)	0.1	0.3
Trans Fat (g)	0.0	0.0
Polyunsaturated Fat (g)	0.3	0.9
Monounsaturated Fat (g)	0.1	0.2
Carbohydrate (g)	20.1	67.0
Sugars (g)	0.0	2.8
Dietary Fibre (g)	3.0	10.1
Sodium (mg)	81	270



## 5. Consider resistant starch

Most foods which are high in fibre have resistant starch, which can be good for diabetes control. You can increase the amount of resistant starch by changing the way you prepare food. Examples:

- Cool cooked oats for several hours or overnight before eating
- Cool cooked potato for a few hours before eating and reheat

## 6. Drink plenty of water

To keep your bowel function normal, drink more water when you are eating more fibre-rich foods.

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