



Fit in fiber even on a gluten-free diet

What about people who are on gluten-free diets — how can we get enough fiber?

You're right — consuming enough fiber can be challenging for a person who can't eat any products made with whole wheat. And if you're diagnosed with celiac disease, the last thing you want to do is consume anything that contains gluten. That means steering clear of all foods with any sort of ingredients stemming from wheat, rye, barley or even triticale (a wheat hybrid).

Even oatmeal can be problematic, and people with this condition are told to avoid it, too — thereby removing another common high-fiber food from their "to-eat" list.

The condition can be serious. When people with celiac disease consume a product containing gluten, their small intestines rebel. Within an hour, they can suffer sharp abdominal pain, vomiting or diarrhea. Their immune system is actually attacking the tiny finger-like villi in the small intestine, inhibiting the absorption of nutrients. That, in turn, can result in anemia, malnutrition and osteoporosis. Growth problems, bone pain, skin rashes, seizures and infertility are also associated with celiac disease. But you also want to get enough fiber in your diet. High-fiber diets are associated with a lower risk of diabetes, heart disease, and may also decrease the risk of certain types of cancer. How much do you need? The basic formula is 14 grams of fiber per 1,000

calories consumed. So, if you generally eat 1,800 calories a day, you should strive for 25 grams of fiber a day. If your daily calorie intake is more like 2,500 calories a day, you should get 35 grams of fiber along with it.

Some of the highest-fiber foods that don't contain gluten are:

- Beans, peas and other legumes. These can be rich sources of fiber. Check the labels for fiber content per serving.
- Fruits and vegetables. Among the highest-fiber choices are apples, pears and citrus fruits; strawberries, raspberries and other berries, particularly those with consumable seeds; and broccoli, carrots, peppers, potatoes (with the skin), winter squash, sweet potatoes, cabbage and brussels sprouts.
- Nuts, particularly almonds and pistachios.
- Brown rice isn't a bad source of fiber, but be bold: Try other grains such as quinoa, amaranth and buckwheat. They also are good sources of fiber and will add variety to your diet.

For more information on celiac disease, go to MedlinePlus, a service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health, at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/celiacdisease.html>.

Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu.



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