

# Digestive Health

Fiber from a diet rich in whole grains, fruits and vegetables helps keep things moving through the intestines and colon and can help support a healthy digestive system.<sup>1</sup>

Experts recommend eating at least 25-38 grams of fiber a day, from a variety of grains, fruits and vegetables (examples in the table below) to help support a healthy digestive system.<sup>2</sup> However, according to the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, more than 90% of women and 97% of men do not meet recommended intakes for dietary fiber. A 2018 survey revealed potential reasons for this underconsumption: 52% of adults want to increase the amount of fiber in their diets, yet many don't know where to start, believe that adding fiber will be difficult or think a high fiber diet will lack taste.<sup>3</sup>

There are two types of dietary fiber, soluble and insoluble. Both provide health benefits and can be found in oats!

- **Soluble fiber** can help support heart health\* by lowering LDL cholesterol and, because it slows digestion, may help manage blood glucose levels and promote fullness.
- **Insoluble fiber** helps support healthy digestion by promoting movement of food through the digestive tract.<sup>1</sup>

\* Three grams of soluble fiber from oats as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may help reduce the risk of heart disease. A serving of Old Fashioned oats provides 2 grams.

## Help Clients Close the Fiber Gap

To help address barriers to getting enough fiber and reduce the "fiber gap," oats are a great place for your clients to start – **one serving of old fashioned, quick or steel cut oats provides 4 grams of fiber, and one packet of instant oats (original flavor) provides 3 grams.** The versatility of this whole grain offers countless ways to get more nutrition and taste out of what they eat each day. More food sources of fiber are provided in the table below.



Food/Serving	Dietary Fiber
Black Beans - 1/2 cup	7.5
Avocado - 1/2 cup	5.0
Apple - 1 medium	4.4
Quaker Old Fashioned Oats - 1/2 cup	4.0
Raspberries - 1/2 cup	4.0
Peas - 1/2 cup	4.0
Prunes - 1/2 cup	3.8

In addition to educating clients on which foods contain fiber, encourage them to find interesting and delicious ways to add these foods into their eating plans:

- Stir fruit into yogurt, oatmeal or pancake batter
- Replace some of the beef in chili or Mexican dishes with beans
- Mix oats into meatloaf, meatballs or burgers
- Swap out refined grains for their whole grain counterpart
- Blend oats into smoothies
- Replace up to half of the flour in recipes for oat flour or whole wheat flour
- Substitute half of the fat called for in baked goods with pureed beans or pureed prunes
- Add chopped vegetables to soups, pasta dishes or casseroles



To avoid digestive discomfort, remember to encourage clients to increase their fiber intake gradually and drink plenty of water.

## A Digestive Do-Gooder for Special Diets

Quaker even offers gluten-free varieties that adhere to the FDA's standards for gluten-free while offering the same nutrition and great taste of our traditional oats. Look for specially-marked gluten-free products. As with any food, consumers who have a food allergy, intolerance or other dietary restriction should check the label to ensure their favorite Quaker product meets their specific needs.

1. Mayo Clinic. Dietary fiber: Essential for a healthy diet. Retrieved from

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/fiber/art-20043983>.

2. Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. (2002) *Intakes for Energy, Carbohydrate, Fiber, Fat, Fatty Acids, Cholesterol, Protein, and Amino Acids (Macronutrients)*

3. The NPD Group, *Eating Patterns in America 2018*

# A Sample Meal Plan to Help Support Digestive Health

The 2020 Dietary Guidelines recommend consuming 25–38 grams of fiber per day. This meal plan provides 39 grams of dietary fiber.

## Breakfast

### Banana Berry Oat Smoothie



1 packet instant oats (original flavor)



1 cup low-fat milk



½ cup plain nonfat yogurt



½ large banana



½ cup strawberries



2 tsp. honey

### Toast



1 slice whole grain bread



1 Tbsp. almond butter

## Snack



½ cup cherries



1 cup plain nonfat yogurt

## Lunch

### Chicken Avocado Sandwich



2 slices whole grain bread, toasted



¼ avocado, sliced or mashed



3 oz. grilled or baked chicken breast, sliced



1 tomato slice



1 red onion slice

### Side



½ cup baked sweet potato fries



1 Tbsp. ketchup

## Snack



1 cup carrots



1 cup broccoli



2 Tbsp. hummus

## Dinner

### Savory Oat Bowl



¼ cup dry steel cut oats (cook in 1 ½ cups low-sodium chicken broth)



¼ cup each onion, mushrooms, spinach



Cherry tomatoes



1 garlic clove, sautéed in 2 tsp. olive oil



3 oz. salmon



Salt and pepper to taste (optional)

### Side



1 apple

## Snack



2 cups plain popcorn



1 piece of low fat string cheese

**TOTAL: 2000 calories, 39 grams fiber**