

High Fiber Diet

Dietary fiber is the part of a plant which is not digested by the stomach or small intestine. Rather, it arrives unchanged in the colon. There, it does two things:

It provides bulk or roughage and thereby helps promote regularity.

Far more important, many of these fibers are a food and nourishment source for the myriad numbers of bacteria that normally reside in the colon.

When adequate fiber is consumed, 25-35 grams per day, many amazing health benefits occur in the colon and body.

Function of the Colon

One job of the colon is to complete the digestive process. This occurs by removing excess water from food wastes entering from the small intestine. When wastes pass through the intestines too quickly, not enough water is absorbed. Watery stools and diarrhea are the result. In contrast, if the passage of waste is too slow, too much water is absorbed. This results in hard stools and constipation, which often leads to constipation and straining.

These above facts have long been known. What is now known is that the huge numbers and the great diversity of bacteria within the colon play a vital role in promoting and maintaining good health. These benefits include producing vitamins and enzymes, enhancing the immune system, controlling cholesterol and triglyceride levels, even in the prevention of certain cancers.

Bacteria in the Colon

The huge numbers of bacteria in the colon and the consumed fiber that reaches it are tied together.

There are trillions upon trillions of bacteria in the human colon, more than 10 times the human cells in the body. There is a reason for this. The total number of genes in all these bacteria is 100 times greater than the genes in a person's body. There is a reason for this as well. Each person has their own particular make up of bacteria in his or her colon, much like a fingerprint. The only way to change this is to make a permanent change in the fiber intake.

The bacteria in the colon have been called "super organisms" because of all the wonderful healthful outcomes they can produce. The bacteria are your friends. Protect and grow the good ones. Get rid of the bad ones.

The Importance of Dietary Fiber

While there are many types of fiber that interest food chemists, there are only a few that need concern the public:

Insoluble Fiber - This fiber does not dissolve in water, nor is it fermented by the bacteria in the gut. Rather, it retains water and in so doing helps to promote a softer, bulkier stool. This, in turn, may be of importance in sweeping out certain toxins and cancer-causing carcinogens.

Soluble Fiber - These fibers are fermented by colon bacteria. These bacteria need their own nourishment and food source. The health benefits these bugs provide is strictly dependent on the amounts of soluble fiber.

Prebiotic Soluble Fiber - There are specialized types of soluble fibers which have been demonstrated to have the most positive health benefits, as found in established medical research centers. The three that have been definitively proven are inulin, oligofructose and galacto-oligosaccharide.

In summary, all plant fiber has both insoluble and soluble fiber in it. However, the amount varies. Wheat and corn fiber are 90% insoluble, while oats is about 50/50. Artichokes are very high in soluble fiber. Eating 25-35 grams per day of varied plant-based food will provide a well-balanced amount of fiber inulin.

Health Benefits of Prebiotic Fibers

It is remarkable to know the health benefits that are provided when adequate amounts of prebiotic plant fibers are added to your diet, yet each of these below is supported by medical research in medical research centers and by peer-reviewed medical journals.

Increase Good Colon Bacteria

Increase Calcium Absorption

Enhance Immune System

Reduce Triglycerides Level

Control Appetite and Weight

Reduce Colon Polyp and Cancer Factors

Increase Satiety and Weight Loss

Improve Bowel Regularity

Increase Bone Density

Decrease Bad Colon Bacteria

Reduce Allergies and Asthma

Improve Colon and Body Health

While prebiotic fibers are distributed widely in nature in small amounts, they are particularly concentrated in the following vegetables:

Onions

Garlic

Bananas

Leeks

Artichokes

Asparagus

Yams

Wheat (Small Amount)