

Brakes guide to Fibre

What is fibre?

Fibres are plant-based carbohydrates that aren't digested or absorbed in the small intestine. Fibre helps to keep the digestive system healthy and can prevent constipation by bulking up stools, making them softer and easier to pass. There is strong evidence that eating a diet with lots of fibre is associated with reduced risks of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and bowel cancer. Fibre rich foods can also enhance the feeling of fullness.

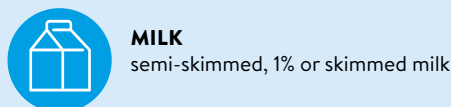
How much fibre do we need?

The UK fibre target for adolescents and adults is 30g/day but on average, we consume much less than this so we all need to increase our fibre intake. It is recommended that children aged 2-5 should consume 15g/day; children aged 5-11, 20g/day and children aged 11-16, 25g/day.

Fibre and hydration

It's important to keep hydrated and to drink plenty of fluid. This helps to encourage the passage of waste through the digestive system and helps soften stools. Fibre acts like a sponge, absorbing water. Without fluid, fibre can't function properly and might lead to constipation.

We should drink 6-8 glasses of fluid every day which is approximately 1.5 litres. Water, low fat milk (semi-skimmed or skimmed milk) and sugar free drinks including tea and coffee, all count towards fluid intake. Fruit juice/smoothies also count but should be limited to a maximum serving of 150ml per day.



Which foods contain fibre?

Wholegrain breakfast cereals, porridge, wholewheat pasta, wholemeal and wholegrain bread, potatoes with the skin on, fruits, vegetables, peas, beans, lentils, pulses, nuts and seeds are all sources of fibre and should be included as part of a balanced diet.



Source: Data collated and analysed by Brakes nutritionist and Brakes customer marketing from Public Health England, NHS and the BDA

How to include fibre in your daily meals:



BREAKFAST

- Porridge
- Wholegrain breakfast cereals
- Fruit



LUNCH

- Jacket potato (skin on) with beans
- Sandwich made with wholemeal bread
- Lentil & veg soup
- Dried fruit



DINNER

- Wholewheat pasta dishes
- Bean-based chilli
- Lentil-based curry



SNACKS

- Fruit
- Vegetable sticks with houmous
- Oatcakes