

# Fiber and Digestion

Basics facts about fiber,  
probiotics and bowel health

# Fiber and Digestion

Starts with British surgeon Denis Burkitt.

He worked in Africa (his lymphoma) and noticed something about native health:

No diabetes, no diverticulitis, no cancer, no constipation...

# Fiber and Digestion

He eventually theorized that it was due to high fiber content of the diet.

This contrasted sharply with Western dietary habits.

But was he correct?

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He produced a slide something like this:



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Of course it's not just about "fiber" but about raw or natural wholefoods.

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For years, I followed the line of natural foods containing great nutrients and down-played the mechanical factor of fiber. Now it seems I was right... in a roundabout way!

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Although much is made of the quality and bulk of the stool, the pre-biotic properties seem overwhelmingly more important.

Fiber foods can help your bowel flora!

# Fiber and Digestion

Fiber comes largely from oligosaccharides (short chain sugars).

These have documented immune modulation properties.

Also pre-biotic in nature

# Fiber and Digestion

## Types of Fiber:

So-called soluble fiber: dissolves somewhat.

Absorbs moisture and creates bulk.  
Slows intestinal passage

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Speeds up intestinal passage. Laxative effect.

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Speeds up intestinal passage. Laxative effect.

Both types are, of course, important

# Fiber and Digestion

## Sources: Soluble fiber

From oats, legumes, some fruits, nuts, flax seed, psyllium, cucumbers, celery, and carrots

# Fiber and Digestion

## Sources: Insoluble fiber

From wheat, whole grains, bran, seeds, nuts, barley, brown rice, zucchini, celery, brassicas, onions, dark leafy vegetables and vegetable skins.



# Fiber and Digestion

## How Much?

Text books say 30 - 40 grams a day. But what does that mean?

- 4 grams in a potato skin
- Split peas/lentils: 15/16 grams! (1 cup)

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## How Much?

Raspberries a surprise at 8 grms (1 cup)

Artichoke 10.5 grams

Baked beans similar: 10 grams.

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Jerusalem artichoke

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Special cases:

Psyllium husk

Inulin (from chicory, jerusalem artichoke)

Glucomannan

Vegetable fiber gum (guar etc.)

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The **ONLY** non-plant source of suitable pre-biotic oligosaccharides is human breast milk and these play an important role in the development of a healthy immune system in infants.

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We also know it powerfully protects against food and other allergies.

So we have closed the loop