

We all know the amazing benefits of fiber:

- Prevents constipation and hemorrhoids
- Lowers risk of diverticulosis
- Reduces risk for some chronic diseases and cancers
- Helps lower LDL cholesterol associated with heart disease
- Lowers blood sugar for better diabetes maintenance

And now that we have brushed up on our fiber benefits we need to keep in mind that there are two types of fiber that each have their own identity and job to fulfill. Soluble and insoluble fibers: which are both undigested, and are not absorbed into the bloodstream. Fiber passes through the intestine fairly unchanged softening the stools and easing the passage. Lack of fiber causes constipation, which in turn if forced out with pressure can lead to diverticulosis.

Soluble Fiber is a plant fiber that does not dissolve, it actually forms as a gel when mixed with liquids. It is known for binding with fatty acids and because it travels at a slower pace through the stomach it slows the release of sugars into the system in turn regulating the blood sugar levels for people with diabetes. While traveling through the colon it also provides food for the healthy bacteria that thrive and support our intestinal system and many other health benefits.

Foods to look for that are high in soluble fiber are:

- oats in any form - cereal, muffins, etc.
- apples, oranges, grapefruit, peaches, concord grapes
- carrots
- prunes, pears, cranberries
- beets
- beans
- sesame seeds
- psyllium found in dietary supplements and cereals

Insoluble Fiber is the fiber, also known for its roughage or bulk qualities. This fiber does not dissolve in water but ironically hangs onto water in the large bowel, in turn creating a large, soft and bulky stool that moves smoothly through the intestines. Insoluble fiber does promote regularity and is associated with reducing the chance of getting colon polyps and colon cancer,

by keeping an optimum level of pH in the intestines. For it is believed that cancerous toxic waste is swept through the bowel in a quicker way keeping microbes from producing cancerous substances. Its qualities are also known to help enhance weight loss.

Foods to look for that are high in insoluble fiber are:

- whole wheat bread and baked goods
- dark leafy vegetables and green beans
- wheat bran
- wheat oat
- whole grain breads
- vegetables and fruits, especially the skins
- seeds and nuts
- popcorn
- brown rice

If life has got you too busy there are some great soluble fiber supplements out there that you should consider in your daily regimen, these are not laxatives, they basically help the bowels function normal daily as well as prevent and relieve diarrhea and constipation.

For those who have diverticulosis and want to keep it under control (and even those who don't), just remember to maintain a healthy diet, high in fiber with a concentration on soluble fibers and a little lighter on insoluble fibers, that is the primary daily treatment needed.