

How to Increase your Child's Fibre Intake

Why is Fibre important?

Fibre is needed for normal bowel function. It is found in cereals, fruit, vegetables, grains and pulses. It cannot be digested by the body so acts as a bulking agent and absorbs water as it passes through the digestive system. This makes stools soft and easy to pass.

A high fibre diet is part of a healthy lifestyle and is recommended for the whole family.

What are the best foods for Fibre?

- Wholegrain cereals e.g. Weetabix, Ready Brek, Shreddies, Branflakes, Shredded Wheat (including bite sized versions and those with added dried fruit), porridge oats, Fruit and Fibre, All Bran
- Wholemeal, granary or high fibre white bread
- Brown rice or wholewheat pasta in place of white versions
- Chapatti made with wholemeal flour
- Replace half of the white flour in recipes with wholemeal flour (plain or self-raising are available): use for scones, crumble topping, cakes and pastries
- Wholewheat biscuits and crackers; such as digestives, oatcakes, hobnobs
- Cereal bars and muesli bars
- Dried fruit – e.g. mini packets of raisins, apricots, figs, dates and prunes. Because dried fruit is very sweet, it can increase the risk of tooth decay; so it's better to eat it as part of a meal, rather than as a snack
- Fresh fruit eaten with the skin on, e.g. peaches, apples, plums, grapes
- Potatoes with their skin on, such as boiled new potatoes or jacket potato (as long as you eat the skin)
- Pulses – such as peas, baked beans, broad beans, kidney beans, butter beans, sweetcorn, chickpeas and lentils
- Unsalted nuts and seeds (DO NOT give whole nuts to children under 5 years due to risk of choking)
- Vegetables and salad. Include plenty of vegetables with meals, either as a side dish or added to sauces, stews or curries.

Encourage three regular meals per day and limit snacks between meals to encourage appetite.

Drinks

- At least 6-8 glasses of fluid per day, ideally water
- Drinking just before a meal may reduce appetite so offer drinks after meals or snacks
- If drinking milk, limit intake to 1 pint / 600mls per day as this will also reduce appetite for food

For further information please contact the Paediatric Dietitians on 0121 424 1674.

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk