



Fibre and wholegrains

Fibre is an important part of a healthy, balanced diet and you'll need to keep an eye on this as you follow your gluten-free diet. Cutting out gluten means not eating staple cereals, such as wheat, and this can mean that your diet is lower in fibre and wholegrains.

What is fibre?

Fibre is only found in foods that come from plants and is the part which passes through the body without being digested or absorbed. Fibre helps to prevent constipation by moving food and waste through the gut. There is evidence to show that diets high in fibre are associated with a lower risk of heart disease and bowel cancer. Certain types of fibre can also reduce cholesterol levels. Good sources of fibre include wholegrain cereals, fruit, vegetables and pulses such as peas, beans and lentils.

What are wholegrains?

Grains are the seeds of cereal plants. They are made up of three parts:

- bran forms the outer layer and is rich in fibre
- germ forms the inner layer and is rich in nutrients, such as B vitamins and vitamin E
- endosperm forms the centre of the grain and is the starchy part.

Wholegrain cereals contain all three parts of the grain. White refined cereals, such as white rice, have had the germ and bran removed. Wholegrains are higher in fibre, vitamins, minerals and protein.

We should all eat more wholegrains as part of a healthy, balanced diet. Including more wholegrains in your diet, such as brown rice, amaranth, millet, quinoa, sorghum, teff and gluten-free oats can help to increase your fibre intake.

How much fibre is recommended?

Fibre content can be measured in two different ways:

- Non-starch Polysaccharide (NSP)
- Association of Official Chemists (AOAC) .

Old recommendations were based on NSP, but guidelines introduced in 2015 recommend the use of AOAC. All values in this leaflet are based on AOAC.

Most people in the UK do not eat the recommended amounts of fibre. Adults should have 30g fibre each day and children over 2 should have between 15g - 25g each day, depending on their age.

Sources of fibre

Food per serving	Amount of fibre
Jacket potato, 200g	6.7g
Peas, 80g	5.9g
Baked beans, 80g	5.2g
Chickpeas, 80g	4.3g
Brown rice (cooked), 195g	4g
Sweetcorn, 80g	3.3g
Dried apricots, 30g	2.5g
Mixed nuts, 25g	2.1g
Red lentils, 80g	2g
Gluten-free cornflakes, 30g	1.2g



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Tips to increase your fibre intake

- Aim for at least five portions of fruit and vegetables each day (especially those with skins, pips and seeds). Fresh, frozen, tinned, dried and juiced all count.
- Serve fruits and vegetables unpeeled where possible.
- Add a handful of dried fruit, nuts or seeds to your gluten-free breakfast cereals or yoghurt.
- Add pulses, such as peas, beans or lentils, and extra vegetables to soups, curries and stews.
- Try gluten-free wholegrains such as amaranth, millet, quinoa, sorghum and teff.
- Choose naturally gluten-free foods such as brown or wild rice and jacket potatoes with their skins.
- Opt for brown, multigrain or fibre versions of gluten-free breads, rolls, flour, pasta, pizza bases and crackers.

Increase the amount of fibre you eat gradually and make sure that you drink plenty of fluids at the same time.

If you're concerned about your fibre intake, speak to your dietitian for further advice.

Can I eat oats?

Research suggests that most adults and children with coeliac disease can have the gluten like protein, called avenin, found in oats. Oats are a good source of soluble fibre and can add variety to your diet.

However, oats and oat products are often contaminated with wheat, rye or barley during harvesting or milling, making them unsuitable for a gluten-free diet.

Uncontaminated oats and oat products that are suitable for a gluten-free diet are listed in the oats chapter of your Food and Drink Directory.

A very small number of people with coeliac disease may still be sensitive to uncontaminated oat products. If you're thinking about including gluten-free oats in your diet, talk to your dietitian for specific guidance and ongoing monitoring.

This information is for guidance only and should not replace advice given by your healthcare professional.

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