

## Dietary Fiber and Weight Management

Dietary Fiber is important for digestion, weight control, and prevention of chronic diseases. There are many different types of fiber and a healthy diet includes a variety of these fibers.

### **Soluble Fiber:**

**What:** Soluble fibers absorb water during digestion; therefore, these foods increase feelings of fullness. This can help you control the amount of food you eat and lead to weight control/loss. Types of Soluble Fiber include and are found in:

- **Pectin:** A natural fiber found in most plants and in high concentrations of the skins, cores and seeds of fruits. Example: Apples and oranges.
- **Beta-Glucans:** Naturally occurring in the cell walls of whole grains, oats, bran, wheat, barley, and some fungi.
- **Inulin:** Produced by plants and can be extracted from chicory root, artichokes, agave, asparagus, bananas, garlic, leeks, wheat, onions, wild yams.
- **Psyllium:** Made from the husks of the *Plantago ovata* plant's seeds.

### **Resistant Starch:**

**What:** Resistant Starch passes through your digestive tract unchanged (it is resistant to digestion) and has characteristics of both Soluble and Insoluble Fiber. This type of fiber has fewer calories than regular starch and may increase feelings of fullness causing you to eat less.

Sources of Resistant Starch Include:

- Lentils
- Chickpeas
- Oats
- Cornmeal
- Bananas
- Pearl Barley
- Cooking Banana
- Potatoes



## Insoluble Fiber:

**What:** Water-insoluble fibers remain unchanged during digestion. These fibers promote normal movement of intestinal contents and play a role in weight loss by increasing the feeling of satiety. Types of Insoluble Fiber include and are found in:

- **Lignin:** A non-digestible fiber that is found in flaxseed, root vegetables (carrots, parsley, horseradish), wheat bran, edible seeds (in berries, tomatoes), vegetables with edible stems (cabbage, broccoli), green beans, peas, peaches, apples, Brazil nuts.
- **Cellulose:** Found in whole foods, with the skin and seeds intact such as, fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, nuts and seeds. Whole foods have more cellulose than foods that have the skin and seeds removed. Example: Juices do not contain Cellulose.

## Recommendations:

The American Heart Association suggests eating a variety of high fiber foods daily. The recommendations include a total dietary fiber intake of 21- 25 grams (at least 6 grams of Soluble Fiber) for women and 30- 38 grams (at least 6 grams of Soluble Fiber) for men per day. Fiber should be ingested by foods, not supplements.

