

Constipation Nutrition Therapy

Client Name _____ Date _____

Dietitian / Dietetic Technician _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Why Was Nutrition Therapy Prescribed?

Fiber and fluid may help relieve constipation. Increase fiber slowly, over the course of a few weeks. This will keep symptoms from getting worse as your body adjusts to the higher fiber level.

Tips for Adding Fiber to Your Eating Plan

- Eat whole grain breads and cereals. Look for choices with 100% whole wheat, rye, oats, or bran as the first or second ingredient.
- Have brown or wild rice instead of white rice or potatoes.
- Enjoy a variety of grains. Good choices include barley, oats, farro, kamut, and quinoa.
- Bake with whole wheat flour. You can use it to replace some white or all-purpose flour in recipes.
- Enjoy baked beans more often! Add dried beans and peas to casseroles or soups.
- Choose fresh fruit and vegetables instead of juices.
- Eat fruits and vegetables with peels or skins on.
- Compare food labels of similar foods to find higher-fiber choices. Packaged foods have the amount of fiber per serving listed on the Nutrition Facts label.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Set a goal of at least 8 cups per day. You may need even more with higher amounts of fiber. Fluid helps your body process fiber without discomfort.
- If you are taking calcium or iron supplements check with your doctor or dietitian. You may be able to take smaller amounts several times a day.

Recommended Foods

- You may choose any foods.
- Choose foods made with refined white flour less often than foods made with whole grains. (White flour has less fiber than whole grain.)
- The charts on the following pages list many higher-fiber foods.

Note: Slowly increase the amount of fiber you eat to 25 to 35 grams per day.

Foods with at Least 4 g Fiber per Serving

Food Group	Choose
Grains	1/3 – 1/2 cup high-fiber cereals. Check Nutrition Facts labels and choose products with 4 or more grams (g) dietary fiber per serving
Dried beans and peas	1/2 cup cooked red beans, kidney beans, large lima beans, navy beans, pinto beans, white beans, lentils, or black-eyed peas
Vegetables	1 artichoke (cooked)
Fruits	1/2 cup blackberries or raspberries
	4 prunes (dried)

Foods with 1 to 3 g Fiber per Serving

Food Group	Choose
Grains	1 bagel (3.5-inch diameter)
	1 slice whole wheat, cracked wheat, pumpernickel, or rye bread
	2-inch square corn bread
	4 whole wheat crackers
	1 bran, blueberry, cornmeal, or English muffin
	1/2 cup cereal with 1-3 grams fiber per serving (check dietary fiber on the product's Nutrition Facts label)
	2 tablespoons bran, rice, or wheat cereal
	2 tablespoons wheat germ or whole wheat flour
Fruits	1 apple (3-inch diameter) or 1/2 cup applesauce
	1/2 cup apricots (canned)
	1 banana
	1/2 cup cherries (canned or fresh)
	1/2 cup cranberries (fresh)
	3 dates (whole)
	2 medium figs (fresh)
	1/2 cup fruit cocktail (canned)

	½ grapefruit
	1 kiwi fruit
	1 orange (2½-inch diameter)
	1 peach (fresh) or ½ cup peaches (canned)
	1 pear (fresh) or ½ cup pears (canned)
	1 plum (2-inch diameter)
	¼ cup raisins
	½ cup strawberries (fresh)
	1 tangerine
Vegetables	½ cup bean sprouts (raw)
	½ cup beets (diced, canned)
	½ cup broccoli, brussels sprouts, or cabbage (cooked)
	½ cup carrots
	½ cup cauliflower
	½ cup corn
	½ cup eggplant
	½ cup okra (boiled)
	½ cup potatoes (baked or mashed)
	½ cup spinach, kale, or turnip greens (cooked)
	½ cup squash—winter, summer, or zucchini (cooked)
	½ cup sweet potatoes or yams
	½ cup tomatoes (canned)
Other	2 tablespoons almonds or peanuts
	1 cup popcorn (popped)

Sample 1-Day Menu

(Approximately 25 to 30 grams of fiber)

Meal	Food Choices	Dietary Fiber
Breakfast	½ cup Total Raisin Bran with 1 cup skim milk ½ cup orange juice with pulp 1 cup coffee	2.5 grams 0.25 gram
Lunch	1½ cups chili made with ½ cup kidney beans and ¼ cup soy crumbles per serving and topped with 2 tablespoons shredded cheese 8 wheat crackers 1 fresh apple (with skin) 2 cups water or sugar-free lemonade	11.2 grams 0.7 gram 2.5 grams
Snack	8 oz yogurt 2 cups water	
Evening Meal	2 cups mixed fresh vegetables, with 2 ounces sliced chicken and 1 ounce firm tofu 1 cup jasmine rice ½ cup fresh raspberries, blueberries, and sliced bananas 1 cup hot tea	6 grams 1.5 grams 3.5 grams
Snack	2 tablespoons almonds 1 cup hot chocolate	3.3 grams