

Join us for the Fitwize

Nutrition Session

Friday, February 15

4 to 5 PM!



This month we will discuss *fiber* – what it is, why it’s important to our body, and what foods provide fiber.

Fiber, Fiber, Fiber!

By Stephanie Mull, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS

Fiber is an essential nutrient that doesn't provide any calories but offers very specific health benefits. It protects our heart and cardiovascular system by removing unhealthy fats and cholesterol from our blood vessels. Fiber also supports gut health by enhancing the digestive process and balancing the gut biome.



There are two types of fiber which provide two distinct benefits:

1. Soluble fiber – this type of fiber dissolves into the blood stream. It's responsible for supporting heart health by grabbing cholesterol and low-density lipoproteins (LDL) and taking them to the liver for removal.
2. Insoluble fiber – this type of fiber doesn't digest. It stays in the gut which is how it supports digestion and can balance the biome.

Both types of fiber are critical to health! So, it's important to include both in the diet. We need 25-50 grams of fiber a day. The average intake of fiber is between 10-15 grams per day. However, food manufacturers are adding it to their products as a way to attract sales. This type of fiber is synthetic and has a more functional purpose. It's not necessarily the best type of fiber to have because it isn't naturally occurring in foods. Many of my clients end up overconsuming on those types of products because they are trying to boost their health by increasing their fiber intake. They end up having more gastrointestinal symptoms such as bloating and irregular bowel habits.

Your goal should be to include a variety of natural fiber containing foods every day! Soluble fiber is often found in whole grains and starchy vegetables. Insoluble fiber is found in fruits and vegetables. There is no specific guideline for each food item. Rather I suggest you pay attention to how your fiber adds up throughout the day. Cereals, breads, oatmeal, rice, quinoa, and beans are all sources that can provide a significant amount of fiber in a serving. Don't forget about your fresh fruits and vegetables!