

Getting to Know Fiber

5 OR MORE
FRUITS &
VEGETABLES

Fiber is very beneficial to health. It slows down digestion so you will feel fuller longer. Fiber also helps stabilize blood sugar levels by slowing down the digestion of simple sugars. This is especially important for those with diabetes or at risk for developing diabetes.

INCREASE THE FIBER IN YOUR DIET

- Give your snacks and meals a boost of vitamins, minerals and fiber by adding fruits and vegetables.
- Try to introduce at least one new fruit or vegetable item each week into your diet.
- Produce can be purchased fresh, frozen or canned. Make sure frozen produce does not contain any added sugars, sodium or sauces. Buy reduced-sodium canned veggies and rinse them before use.
- To increase the fiber content of your meals or snacks, choose whole fruit instead of juice.
- Consume fruits and vegetables with their skins whenever possible.
- Always try to eat a variety of foods in order to ensure you are getting all the nutrients that you need.

TIPS FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

- Model healthy behaviors for your children.
- Involve your child in all steps of the food-making process — purchasing, preparing, serving and eating — so they can learn healthy habits.
- Change the way you prepare vegetables. For example, grill and sauté veggies, serve them raw, bake them or serve them with a yogurt-based dip. The more options that you give, the more likely that your children will enjoy one of them.

Repeatedly exposing your children to healthy foods encourages them to eat those foods. Do not be discouraged if your child does not like fruits or vegetables the first time.