



## How to Increase Fiber Without Bloating: Simple Tips That Actually Work

Most Americans are getting only about **half** the daily recommended fiber—and that’s a problem. Low-fiber diets are linked to **rising rates of colon cancer** in young adults as well as **increased risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease**. But if you've ever tried to eat more fiber and felt like a balloon afterward, you're not alone.

Good news: **increasing fiber doesn't have to be uncomfortable**. You can enjoy the many benefits of fiber—like better digestion, blood sugar control, and lower cholesterol—without the gas, bloating, or frustration. Here's how.

### Go Slow and Stay Hydrated

If you're starting from a low-fiber diet, increase fiber **gradually over a few weeks**. Sudden changes can overwhelm your gut and lead to bloating or discomfort. And don't forget: **fiber needs water to work properly**, so drink plenty of fluids throughout the day.

### Start with Soluble Fiber

Soluble fiber is gentler on your digestion and helps regulate blood sugar and lower cholesterol. Easy-to-tolerate, fiber-rich foods include:

- **Oats**
- **Chia and flaxseeds**
- **Berries**
- **Avocados**
- **Cooked carrots, zucchini, and sweet potatoes**

Try adding **chia pudding with berries**, **oatmeal with fruit**, or a simple **side of steamed veggies** to your meals.

### Use Blended and Cooked Foods

Blending and cooking foods makes fiber easier to digest.

- ✓ Choose **refried beans over whole beans**
- ✓ Try **nut butters instead of whole nuts**
- ✓ Make **smoothies** with greens, berries, and ground flaxseed

Blending white beans into in soup or spaghetti sauce is great way to get deliciously thick and creamy sauce without the added fat.

### Upgrade Your Grains

Refined grains are stripped of fiber. Make these swaps:

- White rice → **Brown rice or quinoa**
- White bread → **100% whole grain or sprouted grain**
- Regular pasta → **Whole wheat, lentil, or chickpea pasta**

Pro tip: If the label says “made with whole grain,” make sure **whole wheat** is one of the **first three ingredients**, and use the **fiber math trick**—multiply grams of fiber by 10 and compare to total carbs. If fiber x10 is equal to or greater than carbs, it's a good source of fiber.



## Eat Your Greens with Dr. Black | plant-based nutrition for the whole family

### Build a Better Breakfast

Fiber-rich breakfasts help you feel full longer and avoid that 10 a.m. energy crash. Start your day right and your digestion will thank you.

Consider trying:

- **Oatmeal with berries and seeds**
- **Avocado toast on whole grain bread**
- **Chia or quinoa parfaits with cinnamon and fruit**

### 6. Don't Forget the Beans

Legumes are fiber powerhouses. If you're new to them:

- Start with **lentils or split peas**
- Soak and rinse beans well
- Use spices like **cumin, fennel, bay leaf, or epazote** to reduce gas

Blend beans into sauces, soups, or dips. Even small daily servings can improve longevity and lower disease risk.

### 7. Snack Smarter

Ditch the ultra-processed snacks and reach for:

- **Popcorn** (a whole grain!)
- **Trail mix with nuts, seeds, and dark chocolate**
- **Hummus with veggie sticks**
- **Fresh fruit with the peel on**

Snack time is the perfect opportunity to add fiber in a delicious way.

### Final Thoughts

Fiber supports your heart, regulates blood sugar, and protects against disease—but you don't need to suffer through bloating to get the benefits. By **making small, gradual changes** and focusing on **soluble, cooked, and blended fiber-rich foods**, you'll feel better and nourish your body naturally.

👉 Start with one simple swap this week—and remember, you're part of a community committed to healthy living, one bite at a time.