

Health In Progress

Lesson 11

Importance of Fiber



QUESTION 11:

Erica suffers from constipation. She has so much discomfort, her mother brought her to the doctor. Her pediatrician recommended that Erica increase her dietary fiber intake. In order to do this, Erica will need to eat more of the following kinds of foods:

- a. Fruits and vegetables, including dry peas and beans
- b. Whole grain cereals such as oatmeal
- c. Whole grain breads such as whole wheat or "wheat bread"
- d. Nuts (almonds, peanuts)
- e. All of the above

ANSWER: e. All of the above

1. When foods of plant origin are eaten, the part that is not digested is called fiber. Other terms for fiber are "bulk" or "roughage". Fiber is in the cell walls of plants and is not just one substance, but many different types of molecules found in plants.

2. Fiber has been shown to have several beneficial effects in the body including:

- a. Making it easier to go to the bathroom
- b. Decreasing blood cholesterol levels

3. It has been suggested that fiber may play a role in preventing diseases including:

- a. Cancer of the colon (bowel)
- b. Irritable bowel syndrome
- c. Constipation
- d. Obesity
- e. Heart disease

4. **Foods with a lot of soluble fiber include:**

- Oatmeal
- Nuts and seeds
- Legumes (peas, beans, and lentils)
- Apple
- Pears
- Strawberries
- Blueberries

Foods packed with insoluble fibers include:

- Whole-grain bread
- Whole-grain breakfast cereals
- Wheat bran
- Seeds
- Many vegetables, including carrots, cucumbers, zucchini, celery, and tomatoes