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**PATIENT INFORMATION:
HIGH FIBRE DIET**

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HIGH FIBRE DIET

Fibre is a mixture of substances in foods that are not digested by the body. Most of the everyday food that we eat has had its natural fibre content removed through processing. This means that many of us are not getting the fibre in our diet that our intestines require to function properly.

Some fibre is found in fruit and vegetables, but the greatest benefit for the treatment of bowel disorders comes from the intake of increased amount of cereal fibre.

High Fibre Breakfast Cereal

The simplest way for most of us to achieve an adequate fibre intake is a large bowl of high fibre breakfast cereal every morning.

- Look on the packet of what you normally eat and compare the amount of fibre with the amount found in Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, All-Bran or Bran Flakes to see if changing to one of these is required.

Wholemeal Bread

Most brown bread contains more fibre than white bread but there are exceptions, so look on the wrapper. Bread with 7-9g fibre per 100g is ideal whether it is brown or white. Generally speaking it is called wholemeal, wheatgerm or granary bread.

- Always choose high fibre bread.

Brown Rice/Wholemeal Pasta

White rice and pasta have the fibre removed to make them easier to cook. Brown rice and wholemeal pasta take slightly longer to cook, but are much better for you.

- Have a main meal with brown rice or wholemeal pasta once or twice a week each.

Fruit & Vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are a good source of vitamins and essential for a healthy diet, but unless eaten with the skins intact are an inadequate source of fibre on their own.

- A healthy diet should include 5 portions of fruit or vegetables every day.
- Beans and pulses are high in fibre and a useful way of improving the fibre content of soups, casseroles and salads.

Wholemeal Flour

If you do your own baking, replace some or all of the flour with wholemeal flour. (You may need to add a little more liquid to the recipe).

Wholegrain Biscuits & Crispbreads

- If you enjoy biscuits consider whether digestives, oatcakes or wholemeal crackers would be better for you than the ones you eat at the moment.

Drink plenty of Fluids

Tea, coffee and alcohol are diuretics (produce urine) and dry out the bowel contents making the stool harder to pass. Caffeine, which is found in tea, coffee, chocolate and some fizzy drinks also irritates the lining of the bowel and makes itching around the anus worse.

- Drink at least 3 large glasses a day of fruit juice, water or squash.
- If your motions look like rabbits' pellets drink more fluid.

Cooking Tips for Wholemeal Flour

- Use half wholemeal and half white flour in cooking.
- For a soft pastry always use self raising flour.
- 1oz margarine may be substituted by 1 tbs of oil.
- Use fine wholemeal flour for cakes and coarser flour for pastry and bread.
- Use strong plain white flour and wholemeal flour plus baking powder for scones.
- Extra baking powder may be needed.
- Add extra water to pastry.

Other Cooking Tips

- To thicken gravy or sauce for meat dishes use natural bran rather than cornflour.
- Use lentils to thicken soups.
- Use pureed vegetables or fruit as a thickener instead of traditional roux, cream or eggs when making sauces or soups.
- Leave skins on potatoes.
- Shredded or grated raw vegetables can be added to snacks or served as a side salad.

CAUTION

Gradually increase the amount of fibre that you take as the ingestion of dietary fibre is associated with the production of intestinal gas. The bowel will adjust to this if it is done slowly. Otherwise there may be some initial discomfort and bloating on changing to a high fibre diet.

Example High Fibre Diet – 5 Day Plan

Day One

- Breakfast – Porridge with milk, honey & blueberries
- Lunch – Jacket potato (leave the skin on) with baked beans & grated cheese
- Snack – Carrot sticks with houmous
- Dinner – Vegetable curry with lentils & brown rice
- Dessert – Apple slices & honey

Day Two

- Breakfast – Bran flakes with milk & banana slices
- Lunch – Carrot, pea & lentil soup
- Snack – Small handful of unsalted almonds
- Dinner – Whole-grain pasta with chicken, broccoli & tomato sauce
- Dessert – Low fat yoghurt

Day Three

- Breakfast – Fresh raspberries & blackberries with Greek yoghurt
- Lunch – Poached egg & avocado on wholemeal toast
- Snack – Banana
- Dinner – Chilli with kidney beans & brown rice
- Dessert – Oat bran muffin

Day Four

- Breakfast – Wholemeal toast with baked beans
- Lunch – Baked potato (skin on) with tuna & sweetcorn
- Snack – High fibre crispbreads with houmous
- Dinner – Sausage & bean stew with sweet potato mash
- Dessert – Fresh fruit salad

Day Five

- Breakfast – Muesli with fruit salad with mango, pear, apple, orange & raspberries
- Lunch – Wholemeal toast with baked beans & grated cheese
- Snack – Wholegrain crackers with peanut butter
- Dinner – Salmon stir-fry with carrots, broccoli & peas
- Dessert – Dried figs

Useful Links:

Dietary Fibre – British Nutrition Foundation www.nutrition.org.uk

Spotlight on high fibre diets – www.bbcgoodfood.com