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FUN FACTS ABOUT FIBRE

INTRODUCTION TO FIBRE

Adequate fibre intake is important to support our health and well-being; however, most Canadians are only consuming half of their daily recommended intake¹. Fibre is a type of carbohydrate that cannot be digested² and is described as either insoluble, soluble, or inulin³. Each type of fibre provides unique benefits based on its structure. For example, insoluble fibre does not dissolve in water and supports bowel regularity; soluble fibre dissolves in water to form a gel that can help lower cholesterol levels, control blood sugar; and inulin supports the growth of healthy bacteria in your gut³.

RELEVANCE TO LONG-TERM CARE

A common concern among residents in LTC as their food intake, fluid consumption, and physical activity decline, is constipation. Medications (i.e. narcotics, antidepressants, and diuretics) also contribute to chronic constipation which results in an increased use of laxatives, suppositories, and enemas⁵. The Menu Planning in Long Term Care (LTC) with Canada's Food Guide (2019) handbook suggests that menus in LTC should provide 30 g/day of fibre from meals and snacks⁴. This meets the recommended daily fibre intake for adults 50 yrs+, 30 g and 21 g for males and females, respectively³. The good news is that a combination of adequate fluids, physical activity, and dietary fibre may help regulate bowels and

decrease dependence on laxatives. It is important to work collaboratively with other health care professionals and the resident to create personalized high fibre interventions that support their nutritional goals.



IMPROVING INTAKE OF FIBRE

Menus should incorporate high fibre items to ensure that residents can meet their daily needs. This can be accomplished by promoting higher fibre breads (i.e. whole wheat, rye, etc.), offering fruits for dessert and as snacks, serving high fibre cereals at breakfast, integrating plant-based foods into the menu (i.e. beans and legumes), and providing a variety of vegetables at lunch and supper. Other factors that influence fibre intake are residents' food preferences and appetite. Residents should be regularly assessed by a Registered Dietitian to determine if additional supplementation from high fibre foods at meals and snacks is needed, ensuring any intervention is appropriate based on the resident's medical history and preferences. High fibre commercial fruit spreads, wheat bran, and

flaxseeds and other products may be useful to easily add fibre into meals (i.e. toast, soups, cereals etc.). Other high fibre options include fibre rich baked items (i.e. bran muffins, date squares)⁵ and stewed prunes. Care communities may also create their own high fibre recipes served in specified portions⁵ or consider the use of high fibre commercial products that can be spread on toast, mixed into cereal, or eaten on their own⁵. High fibre beverages (i.e. prune juice, commercial fibre drinks) are also ideal as they provide additional fibre and fluids.

INCREASING FLUID CONSUMPTION



Fluid intake is a factor that supports bowel regularity as it helps plump up fibre, allowing it to move smoothly through the digestive tract⁶. As fibre intake increases, adequate fluid is needed to prevent nausea and worsening of constipation⁶. The Menu Planning in LTC with Canada's Food Guide (2019) handbook indicates that the standard menu in LTC should provide a minimum of 2000 mL/day of fluids from meals and snacks⁴. Unfortunately, dehydration continues to be a

common challenge for residents in LTC. This is a result of several factors which include decreased thirst signals, challenges related to consuming meals and fluids, and side effects of medications⁷. Staff can help improve fluid intake by offering fluid alternatives (i.e. gelatin, soup, canned fruit, meal supplement drinks, etc.), increasing the quantity of fluids served when medications are administered to residents⁵, offering fluids throughout the day and/or implementing water stations⁵, and by accommodating resident fluid preferences (i.e. type, temperature)⁵.

SOURCING PRODUCTS TO INCREASE FIBRE INTAKE

Sysco has a variety of high fibre products available that can be incorporated into your care community. The following chart highlights items that may be available at your Sysco site: personalized high fibre interventions that support their nutritional goals.

ITEM	SUPC	BRAND	PACK	SIZE	FIBRE CONTENT
Muffin Batter Dark Bran	9994518	Quaker	1	15 lb	7g of fibre per 100g
Muffin Batter Golden Raisin Bran	2712644	Quaker	1	8 lb	7g of fibre per 100g
Dessert Bar Date Square	1742873	Sysco Classic	2	2.85 kg	2g of fibre per 40g
Beans Lentil Green	5328780	Sysco Classic	6	1.5 kg	4g of fibre per 35g
Beans Lentil Red Split	5330313	Sysco Classic	6	2 kg	4g of fibre per 35g
Peas Green	7674534	Sysco Classic	6	2 kg	4g of fibre per 125 ml
Rice White & Wild Blend	1157270	Sysco Classic	5	2.27 kg	2g of fibre per 45g
Barley Pearled	5328378	Sysco Classic	6	1.5 kg	7g of fibre per 45g

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