**THE IMPORTANCE OF DIETARY FIBER**

Dietary Fiber, also known as roughage or bulk, includes all parts of plants that your body cannot digest or absorb and is found mainly in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes. There are two types of fiber:

- **Soluble** fiber dissolves in water and forms a gel-like substance as it passes through your digestive system. This substance helps slow digestion and prevents your body from absorbing too much starch and sugar. Some good sources of soluble fiber are: oats, beans, peas, apples, citrus fruits, carrots, barley, and psyllium.

- **Insoluble** fiber promotes the movement of material through your digestive system and is a great benefit for those who suffer from constipation or irregular stool. Some great sources of insoluble fiber are: whole wheat flour, wheat bran, beans, and vegetables such as cauliflower, green beans, and potatoes.

For the greatest benefit from both types of fiber eat a wide variety of high-fiber foods.

The recommended amount of fiber for your diet is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Age 50 or younger</th>
<th>Age 51 or older</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men:</td>
<td>38 grams</td>
<td>30 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women:</td>
<td>25 grams</td>
<td>21 grams</td>
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</tbody>
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The benefits of consuming the recommended amount of fiber are:

- Normalizes bowel movements
- Assists in maintaining bowel health
- Lowers cholesterol, reducing the risk of Heart Disease
- Aids in controlling blood sugar levels, reducing the risk of Type 2 Diabetes
- Aids in achieving a healthy weight
- Helps those who suffer from Irritable Bowel Syndrome or Diverticulosis
- May help in preventing colorectal cancer

For more information on the benefits of fiber please visit:
