

Chapter 4

Health & Medicine



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Microbiology Dietary fiber or roughage are synonyms for the same thing. Dietary fiber is very important for digestion and good health. In the United States, fiber has been divided into dietary fiber which includes non-digestible carbohydrates, functional fiber and total fiber. Dietary fiber is mainly plant material including lignin and polysaccharides. Lignin and polysaccharide are resistant to human digestive enzymes and are not absorbed in the intestinal tract. Lima beans have the highest percentage of fiber whereas fruits such as apples and strawberries have the lowest content of fiber. Second class contains functional fibers which include isolated or extracted non-digestible carbohydrates. Fibers are important as they decrease the chances of intestinal disorders. Various functional fibers such as gums and pectin cause development of gums in the stomach which slow down the transmission of food. Fibers are also known to control blood cholesterol levels, because soluble fibers bind to cholesterol from food objects and reduce its absorption. Fiber intake can be helpful in reducing intestinal disorders and hence the daily recommended dosage which is 25-38 grams should be made common. Knowledge regarding dietary fibers should be incorporated into careers. I, being related to the medical field put my knowledge of fibers into practice. Dietary fiber if taken in the right dosage can be a factor for prevention of intestinal and other disorders. One of the most common symptoms a patient present with is constipation. The best solution to relieve constipation is the usage of fiber in diets. Patients can be counseled that there are no cons to the usage of fibers. Patients should also be told that the daily recommended dosage of fibers in the diet. Patients visiting the doctor should also be educated on which food items contain how much percentage of fibers. The significance of dietary fiber and its need in the diet is known by many

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people but there are still many confusions amongst them. The misunderstood thing is that fibers are present in plants that we eat but it needs to be known these parts of plants are not digested in our body and are rather left undigested. Dietary fibers have their pros and cons. These can be misleading and a thorough understanding is necessary. Various fibers such as gums and pectin are harmful as they provoke formation of gum like material in the intestine which hinders the transport of food materials resulting in low glycemic action of food items. Different fibers have different functions in the human body which may lead to confuse people. Fibers such as the cereal bran is not fermented in the digestive tract and adds bulk to the stool which makes it softer and easier to pass. Soluble fiber items can also have an action on calcium absorption. Soluble fibers bind to calcium and release it when necessary.

Dietary fiber or roughage are synonyms. Dietary fibers are known to decrease intestinal diseases. There are various types of fibers and they all have different functions. Valid education from sources can decrease this confusion amongst people and can also increase the use of fibers for the reduction in preventable diseases.