

# Fibre ?

## What is fibre?

Fibre is vital for people of all ages. Children who eat a wide variety of foods containing fibre are more likely to have sufficient fibre in their adult years.

Fibre is a substance that is not digested by the body. It is found only in plant foods such as fruits, vegetables and grains. It provides bulk to the food as it passes through the digestive tract. This allows faster travel through the system and the formation of bulkier and more easily passed faeces, causing less constipation.

## How much fibre do children need?

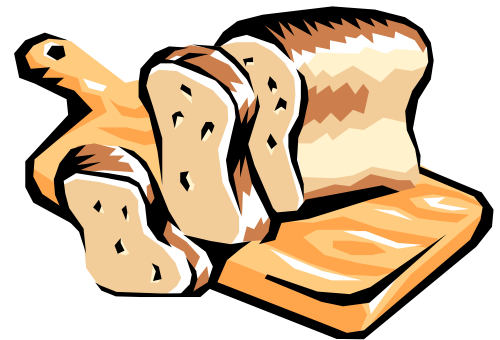
There is no recommended daily amount for small children. As a guideline, children need 5g fibre plus their age each day. An 8 year old child for example would need 5g + 8 years = 13g/day.

This could be achieved through:

- 2 Weetbix - 6g
- 2 slices of wholemeal bread - 3g
- 1 fruit - 2g
- ½ cup vegetables – 2g

Other good sources of fibre for children include:

- fruit and vegetables with their skin left on
- wholegrain or fibre-white breads
- baked beans
- fruit based desserts
- nuts and seeds
- products made with wholemeal flour



## Caution

While it is important to promote good habits around eating fibre (eg eating wholemeal bread and plenty of fruit and vegetables), it is important to remember that young children only need moderate amounts. When their tummies are small, too much will fill them up without giving them enough energy to grow. It can also result in lots of bowel motions and restrict the absorption of some minerals.

It is simple to provide your child with enough fibre by offering a variety of foods. There is no need to add bran to their diet!

Don't forget to ensure they have plenty of water to drink as this helps the fibre bulk up in the gut and get things moving!

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## Healthy Nibbles

Nutrition and Physical Activity Information for Children

For more information visit: [www.cph.co.nz](http://www.cph.co.nz)

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