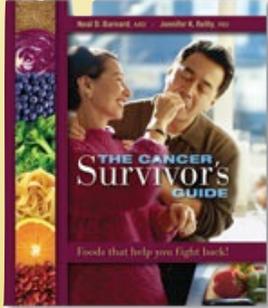


# Nutrition Nuggets: Favoring Fiber

Excerpts from *The Cancer Survivor's Guide*, Chapter 2

“Fiber” is another word for plant roughage--the part of beans, grains, vegetables and fruits that resists digestion. Fiber helps to keep us regular by moving the intestinal contents along. It also helps us rid ourselves of all manner of chemicals--including hormones--that our bodies are anxious to eliminate.

This “waste disposal” system starts in your liver, which continuously filters your blood. As blood passes through the liver’s network of capillaries, liver cells remove toxins, cholesterol, medications, waste hormones, and whatever else your body figures it is better off without. These undesirables are then sent from the liver through the bile duct, which leads to your intestinal tract. There, fiber soaks up these chemicals and carries them out with the wastes.



There is plenty of fiber in vegetables, fruits, beans and whole grains. So if these foods are a big part of your diet, your “waste disposal” system works pretty well. But animal products, such as meat and dairy, contain not a speck of fiber. So if your lunch consisted of chicken and yogurt, there is nothing for the hormones or other chemicals to attach to in your intestinal tract. They end up being reabsorbed back into your bloodstream. This endless cycle keeps hormones circulating for longer than they should. Fiber stops this cycle.

40 grams of fiber are recommended daily for optimum health. Here’s a quick way to check that you are consuming enough fiber in your diet:

- **Beans and lentils: 1/2 cup = 7 grams fiber**
- **Vegetables: 1 cup = 4 grams fiber**
- **Fruits: 1 piece, or 1 cup = 3 grams fiber**
- **Grains: 1 slice whole grain bread or 1 cup cooked pasta = 2 grams fiber**  
**1 cup oatmeal = 4 grams fiber**