

SENIOR NUTRITION NEWS

Eat Smart Idaho

February 2026

Love Your Heart: The Power of Fiber

Fiber is known to improve gut health, but it also plays an important role in maintaining heart health. Many Americans don't get enough fiber in large part due to low fruit and vegetable intake.



Some ideas on how to add more fiber-rich foods to your diet include:

- ▼ **Snack smart:** Grab a piece of fruit, popcorn, veggie sticks, or a handful of nuts or seeds to keep you feeling full between meals.
- ▼ **Include beans or lentils in your meals:** Add black beans to burritos or chickpeas to a salad. Add beans to your favorite recipes.
- ▼ **Include fruits and vegetables with most meals:** Use fresh, canned or frozen fruits and vegetables. Aim to fill half your plate with fruit and veggies. Blend carrots or greens into your fruit smoothies, add extra veggies to soups, add a side salad to meals, or cut up veggies for snacking.
- ▼ **Choose whole grains:** Eat whole wheat bread, brown rice, whole grain pasta, oats and quinoa instead of refined grains.
- ▼ **Choose whole fruits and vegetables instead of juices** most of the time.

Read nutrition labels when purchasing packaged foods to ensure you are choosing high fiber options. The recommended daily intake for fiber is 25 grams for women and 36 grams for men.

When increasing fiber start with smaller amounts and gradually increase your intake of fiber rich foods. This will help your body adjust and reduce discomfort like bloating or gas.

Drink plenty of water and move your body! Fiber absorbs water, so consuming enough fluids and exercising will help keep fiber rich foods moving smoothly through your system.



Strawberry Banana Oat Cookies

1 cup oats
5 strawberries

1 banana
2 tsp vanilla



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F.
3. Combine all ingredients in a bowl; mash well.
4. Make into cookies and bake at 350°F for 15-20 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

Black Bean & Corn Salsa

16-ounce can black beans, no salt added
16-ounce can yellow corn, no salt added
10-ounce can Rotel tomatoes
¼ cup chopped onion
4 Tbsp chopped cilantro
Dash of lime juice



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Combine drained black beans and corn, Rotel, onions and cilantro in a large bowl.
3. Add lime juice to taste. Serve with tortilla chips.

For Information on Eat Smart Idaho classes, contact the Nutrition Instructor in your county:

Panhandle: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary,
Kootenai & Shoshone Counties 208-292-2525

North Central Idaho: Clearwater, Idaho, Latah,
Lewis, & Nez Perce Counties 208-883-2267



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Sources: <https://healthieru.unl.edu/news/fibers-impact-heart-health/>; <https://engagement.source.colostate.edu/how-to-get-more-fiber-and-protect-your-heart/>; <https://uwyocnp.org/recipes/> retrieved 1/27/26

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