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YOUR COACH'S PLAN · FREE WITH THE ARTICLE

The Honest Fiber Ramp Plan

For anyone who saw the fiber trend, tried to do it all at once, and felt worse. Every line below restates a claim verified against Tier-1 medical sources. Nothing here is invented, and nothing is for sale.

✓ CHECKED AGAINST CLEVELAND CLINIC · JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE

1
Your target, not a maximum
22 to 34 grams a day depending on age and sex. From age 51 it is 22 grams for women and 28 for men. (Cleveland Clinic)

2
Almost nobody hits it
Only about 5% of U.S. adults get enough fiber, with most consuming about 16 grams a day. (Cleveland Clinic)

3
The speed limit
Add no more than 5 grams of fiber per week until you reach your goal, or expect bloating and cramping. (Cleveland Clinic)

1. Write down your actual number

The trend has no number. You need one.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic publishes the USDA and HHS Dietary Guidelines figures by sex and age: 28 grams for women and 34 for men aged 19 to 30, 25 and 31 from 31 to 50, and 22 and 28 from 51 onward. Its dietitian also notes these official figures do not account for weight, height and overall health, so an individual target is a question for your provider.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

☐ Find your figure in the age and sex table
☐ Write it where you plan meals
☐ Ask your provider for an individual number if you have a GI condition

2. Add 5 grams a week and no more

This single rule decides how fiber feels.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic's dietitian is specific: adding too much fiber all at once can cause bloating and cramping, so add no more than 5 grams of fiber per week until you reach your individual goal.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

☐ Close the gap over weeks, not over a weekend
☐ Add one fiber habit at a time
☐ If you bloat, hold at the current level rather than quitting

3. Drink the water that goes with it

The step people skip, then blame the fiber.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic states water is essential to keep bowel movements regular when you add fiber, and that without plenty of water more fiber can lead to constipation.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

☐ Pair each new fiber habit with a glass of water
☐ Check your intake on the days you add a new source
☐ Treat water as part of the fiber, not a separate task

4. Get the grams from food first

Cleveland Clinic says food is your best source.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic's dietitian recommends getting fiber from a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans and legumes, and suggests steel-cut oats or a whole-wheat cereal with at least 5 grams at breakfast, lentil stew or bean soup with whole-wheat bread at lunch, and a whole grain beside dinner. Sprinkling bran, ground flaxseed or chia into soups, cereals, sauces or yogurt adds a hit of fiber without changing much in the way of taste.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

☐ Choose a breakfast cereal or oat with at least 5 g of fiber
☐ Add beans or lentils to one lunch this week
☐ Keep ground flaxseed or chia within reach of the stove

5. Get symptoms checked before treating them as a fiber problem

The step that outranks every other on this page.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic's gastroenterologist notes that 10 to 15% of people with intestinal complaints may have organic diseases such as colon cancer or inflammatory bowel disease, and advises talking with a provider both to rule those out and to choose a supplement, because some fiber supplements interfere with medications and there is no one-size-fits-all option.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

☐ Book the appointment if symptoms are new, severe or changing
☐ Bring your medication list when discussing a supplement
☐ Only then choose a supplement, with your provider's input

EVERY CLAIM ABOVE, TRACED TO ITS SOURCE

Cleveland Clinic, Your Fiber Intake: What is the Right Amount? · https://health.clevelandclinic.org/how-much-fiber-per-day
Cleveland Clinic, How Do I Choose the Best Fiber Supplement? · https://health.clevelandclinic.org/best-fiber-supplements
Cleveland Clinic, What Foods Are High in Fiber? · https://health.clevelandclinic.org/high-fiber-foods
Johns Hopkins Medicine, Your Digestive System: 5 Ways to Support Gut Health · https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/your-digestive-system-5-ways-to-support-gut-health

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