Fiber helps keep stools soft and regular and helps to prevent constipation. Fiber is found in plant foods and in fresh foods rather than processed foods or fast foods. Think of fiber as a sponge, without water it is hard and dry, but with water it is soft. Children who get enough fiber and fluid are most likely to have soft, regular bowel movements. Fiber also helps us feel full and satisfied after eating a meal and helps to prevent certain diseases.

**FIBER NEEDS FOR AGE**

Preschool (3 to 5 years) – 15 grams per day
School aged (6 to 12 years) – 20 grams per day
Adolescence (13 to 19 years) – 25 grams per day

**FLUID NEEDS FOR WEIGHT**

Your child needs ________ ounces or ________ cups of fluid each day.

Your child needs ________ grams of fiber each day.

Increase fiber gradually; add 1-2 servings of high fiber food each day to prevent gas and bloating. Increase fluid, primarily as water, to prevent constipation. Limit fruit juice to 4-8 ounces per day. Vegetable juices are high in nutrients, low in calories, and can be given in addition to fruit juice.

**FOODS RICH IN FIBER**

*(Choose Often)*

**Whole Grains:**

Whole grain bread, 100% stone ground wheat bread, high fiber bread, corn bread, corn tortilla, white high fiber bread

Cereals with 3-5 grams or more of dietary fiber per serving: "all bran" type cereals, Corn Bran™, Frosted Mini Wheats™, Mini Wheats™, shredded wheat, high fiber oatmeal

Cereal bars with 3-5 grams dietary fiber per serving: All-Bran® bars, Nutri-Grain® bars, Kashi bars

Whole grains (wheat, oats, barley, rye), brown rice, whole wheat pasta

**Fruits:**

Fresh and dried fruits: apples, berries, grapes, guava, melons, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, prunes, raisins

**Vegetables:**

Fresh vegetables: carrots, celery, cucumbers, tomatoes

Other vegetables: baked beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, corn, frijoles, green beans, green peas, kidney beans, lentils, lima beans, baked potato with skin, pinto beans, spinach, sweet potato
Other Foods and Snacks:
Bean soup, popcorn, nuts, Triscuit crackers, other whole grain crackers

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Choose water to drink for thirst and milk to drink with meals.
2. Remember to include 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
3. Choose a high fiber food for a snack – 1 to 2 snacks a day are recommended for children.
   - Mini bran muffins
   - Trail mix made of high fiber cereals, dried fruits, and nuts*
   - Dried fruits (raisins, citrus flavored prunes, cranberries, pineapple, etc.)
   - High fiber cereal, either with milk or dry as a finger food
4. Serve cooked dried beans, split pea, lentil, or black bean soups. Get the books called Stone Soup or Button Soup from the library. Read with your child, then make mixed bean soup.

*For children 3 years and younger, avoid large pieces of raw vegetables or fruits, grapes, nuts, popcorn, and raisins, which can be choking hazards.

FIBER-RICH SNACK MIX RECIPE
(18 Servings)

2 cups toasted oat cereal  
2 cups crispy bran squares cereal  
2 cups crispy wheat squares cereal  
2 cups stick pretzels  
1-1/2 cups bite size shredded whole wheat cereal biscuits  
butter-flavored cooking spray  
1-1/2 teaspoon onion powder  
1 tsp celery seeds  
1-1/2 tablespoon reduced sodium Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon hot sauce (optional)

Combine first five ingredients in a large roasting pan; spray thoroughly with cooking spray. Combine onion powder and next 4 ingredients; pour over cereal mixture, tossing to coat. Bake at 250° F for two hours, stirring and spraying with cooking spray every 15 minutes. Cool and store in an airtight container.