

[IMAGE]

## Fiber to the Rescue

By Editorial Staff

You probably know that fiber plays a key role in proper bowel function, allowing your gut to do what it's supposed to do: move waste through and out of your system. Now here's what most people probably don't know: fiber also helps reduce antibiotic resistance, an increasingly common consequence of antibiotic use. It doesn't even take that much fiber to make a difference, suggests research.

A dietary analysis specific to soluble fiber intake involving 290 healthy adults revealed that consuming higher levels of soluble fiber (a mere 8-10 grams per day) is associated with fewer antibiotic-resistant GI microbes compared to consuming less soluble fiber. This is significant because the diverse human gut microbiome is designed to fight antimicrobial resistance – but the more you take antibiotics, the less ability your gut has to fight the resistance.

Why? According to the CDC, here's how antibiotic resistance manifests: "Antibiotics and antifungals kill some germs that cause infections, but they also kill helpful germs that protect our body from infection. The antibiotic-resistant germs survive and multiply. These surviving germs have resistance traits in their DNA that can spread to other germs." In other words, antibiotics kill the bad bacteria – but also the good ones. The ultimate result: untreatable infections.

Back to fiber: Do you know how much fiber you get every day? It's probably far lower than you think; and far lower than what's recommended. Per the Mayo Clinic, women need 21-25 grams per day, while men need even more: 30-38 grams. Try tracking your fiber intake for a few days and see how close you get to the recommended grams per day. Adequate fiber consumption matters for more than just antimicrobial resistance (and optimal bowel habits); it also helps lower cholesterol, control blood sugar, maintain a healthy weight and more.

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