



## Fantastic Filling Fiber

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**Fiber is one of nutrition's true multi-taskers.** It helps support digestion, keeps us feeling satisfied after meals and helps lower the risk of certain chronic diseases. Your goal is to choose fiber-rich foods to support good health. Here's how.

### Finding fiber

Fiber is a type of carbohydrate that the body cannot fully digest. Instead of being broken down for energy, it travels through the digestive system and helps everything run smoothly. Fiber is only found in plant-based foods, including:

- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Legumes – beans, lentils, soy
- Whole grains
- Nuts and seeds

There is no fiber in animal-based foods such as meat, poultry, fish and dairy.

### How much fiber?

Guidelines suggest 25 grams (female) to 38 grams (male) of fiber each day, yet most people consume about half of that amount. That's too bad, since fiber keeps the digestive system running smoothly and helps with regularity (and easing constipation). Plus, getting enough fiber helps reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and colorectal cancer.

Fiber also helps with satiety, which is the feeling of fullness after eating. High-fiber foods take longer to chew and digest, which helps you stay satisfied longer. That means fewer hunger pangs and less temptation to snack between meals. This is linked to less weight gain and better weight management over time.

### Bump up the fiber

Add fiber-rich foods slowly to avoid unpleasant side effects such as gas and bloating. Drink plenty of water to help the body adjust comfortably. Small changes can make a big impact, so try one of these at a time:

- Choose whole grain bread instead of white bread
- Sprinkle nuts or seeds on to salads
- Snack on fruit, vegetables + hummus (chickpea dip) or popcorn instead of chips
- Start the day with oatmeal or high-fiber cereal

## Unplug and Unwind

**How would you feel about spending 24 hours away from your electronic devices?** Consider living an entire day, from sundown to sundown, without the static of technology. It's a chance for you and your family and friends to fully disconnect from your phones, computers, streaming — and kick back and enjoy some relaxation together. If a full 24 hours of device-free time is overwhelming, start small with device-free mealtimes, tech-free zones or times such as one night a week, and no screens for 30–60 minutes before bed. Keep screens out of the bedroom overnight.

**Computers, smartphones, smart TVs and video games are integral to our lives.** A typical American family maintains about 17 devices connecting them to people, media, education, work, shopping and more, all at their fingertips. Our kids are growing up quickly in our high-tech world — a 2024 Pew Research Center survey found that nearly all teens — 96% — report using the internet daily and nearly half of teens say they are online almost constantly.

Fortunately, for more than a decade, the Global Day of Unplugging and its related resources have inspired schools, businesses and individuals to adopt and promote a healthy life-tech balance. For ideas on how to unplug visit [globaldayofunplugging.org](https://globaldayofunplugging.org).

**Though the day of unplugging is in March, try taking regular respites from your smart devices to get up and move about.** On your breaks, head outdoors for some fresh air and exercise. By routinely unplugging, you can find time to do some of your other favorite things.

**To maintain safe, appropriate online use, teach kids from a young age about technology and positive online behavior.** You may find it hard to stay on top of all the apps and sites your children may use. To learn more visit [commonsensemedia.org](https://commonsensemedia.org) or for safety tips on specific apps that children commonly use visit [connectsafely.org](https://connectsafely.org).



# Are Circuit Workouts Right for You?

**For renewed energy, fitness and fun, consider circuit training.** It's a flexible and efficient gym routine that maximizes your exercise time. A typical circuit training course offers multiple exercise stations — after you complete 1 station, you quickly move to the next station without resting.

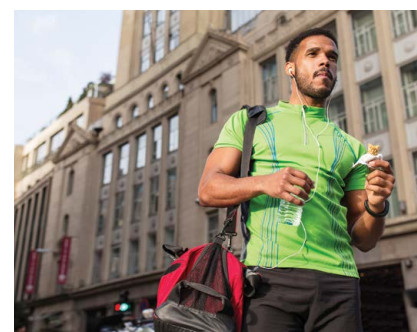
**You can choose a course focused on muscle workouts** with stations that alternate resistance exercise for strengthening your core and various muscle groups using body weight and free weights, for example.

**Another popular routine combines strength training** (with cardiovascular stints) with elliptical, rowing and other machine workouts.

**You can burn more calories with circuit training:** In a 1-hour session, a 150-pound person burns about 308 calories at a moderate intensity, and 573 calories at a vigorous intensity.



**Locate nearby gyms offering circuit training stations** and interview onsite instructors. Consider enlisting a certified personal trainer to design a personalized exercise plan for use at a gym or in your own home. To learn more, visit ACE Fitness at [acefitness.org](http://acefitness.org) and search for **20-minute at-home bodyweight circuit**.



## Avoid the Midday Slump

**A good night's sleep is the best way to start your day at work with enthusiasm and energy.** But within a few hours of work your focus may become cloudy as fatigue sets in — especially after a meal break.

**What steals our ability to think and do our best an hour or 2 after eating?** If you are healthy and not sleep-deprived, the answer is likely related to lifestyle.

### TWO WAYS TO AVOID THE SLUMP:

**1. Skip high-sugar and high-fat meals and snacks.** A sugar-rich cereal or a doughnut can provide temporary pep, but not sustained energy. Or after eating a large, heavy lunch (e.g., high-fat cheese pizza or bacon burger), your body must work hard to digest it, making you sleepy.

**For steady energy at work,** eat modest, balanced meals during your work day and keep healthy snacks, such as apples and carrot sticks, handy.

**2. Take an afternoon walk break instead of a coffee break.** Caffeine improves alertness but too much can make you jittery. Walking improves your energy, mentality and creativity. Even a few short laps around your worksite will help.

## Menopause Relief

**Although menopause is a normal part of aging in women,** hormonal changes can cause annoying and sometimes embarrassing physical changes, such as the sudden perspiration-producing sensations called hot flashes.

**But there are ways to reduce or possibly eliminate menopause symptoms with lifestyle changes, according to the National Institutes of Health:**

- Dress in layers and remove some clothing when you feel a hot flash starting.
- Sipping a cold drink and taking slow, deep breaths can reduce the feeling of heat.
- Avoiding smoking, spicy food, excess caffeine and alcohol can often keep hot flashes at bay.
- Hot flashes disrupt sleep so keep your bedroom cool (a fan nearby can help) and sleep in lightweight clothing.
- Regular exercise can pay off with better sleep quality and help keep weight under control (being overweight is associated with more severe hot flashes).



You can't fully stop weight gain during menopause, but healthy habits help you manage it. The National Institute on Aging suggests eating a healthy diet and staying active, and because bone loss speeds up after menopause, getting enough calcium and vitamin D matters too. Small, steady changes protect both your weight and your heart and bones.

When lifestyle changes aren't providing enough help, talk to your health care provider about other treatments, including prescription medications and low-dose hormones, that may be appropriate for you, depending on your medical history and symptoms.



Smart Moves Toolkit: [personalbest.com/extras/26V10tools](http://personalbest.com/extras/26V10tools). Printable download: [Avoid Tech Support Scams](#).

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