

Health Concepts

November 2023

Create healthy habits, not restrictions.

PREFACE

No matter if it's the New Year resolution or you've just recovered from an illness, the very first thought that comes to your mind is to take control of all unhealthy routines and start healthy habits right away. Forming new habits is not done overnight, and while we need that initial motivation to get started, it's not something we can rely on for good! Please don't get caught up in this 'all-or-nothing' mentality.

Swapping out habits can be more effective than just banishing the unwanted ones. Old behaviors need to be substituted with new, healthy habits. Most often, we feel that something is just not working after a while. We need to be honest with ourselves and see whether we didn't set the bar low enough-or perhaps, it's way too low to even motivate us. Remember, creating healthy habits is a journey, and not a destination. It's important to be patient with yourself and celebrate your successes along the way!

Since you want to stay healthy, active, and happy in the long run, you need to make it very approachable and fun!

- Start small.
- Set realistic expectations.
- Let go of perfection.
- Focus on the positive side.
- Your environment determines your success.

According to a study published in the European Journal of Social Psychology, it takes an average of 66 days for a new behavior to become automatic. However, the time it takes to form a new habit can vary widely depending on the behavior, the person, and the circumstances.

Focus on what works.

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NUTRITIONAL FACTS

मोरिंगा (Hindi)
முருங்கை (Tamil)
మొరింగ్ (Telugu)



DRUMSTICK

Drumstick tree / [Moringa oleifera](#) is a fast-growing, drought-resistant tree of the family [Moringaceae](#), native to the Indian subcontinent and used extensively in South and Southeast Asia. It is widely cultivated for its young seed pods and leaves, used as vegetables, and for traditional herbal medicine. It is known as the miracle tree because of its diversified beneficial features. Moringa is said to provide 7 times more vitamin C than oranges, 10 times more vitamin A than carrots, 17 times more calcium than milk, 9 times more protein than yogurt, 15 times more potassium than bananas, and 25 times more iron than spinach. Moringa leaves are known as a very good food source because they are easily digestible and rich in proteins. Moringa seeds are also rich in vitamins and minerals.

- [Antimicrobial and anthelmintic activities](#): extracts of seed, leaf, and flower have these properties
 - [Antiasthmatic activity](#) - moringa seed kernel helps in the treatment of bronchial asthma.
 - [Prevention from cancer](#) - The compounds present in the leaves are responsible for anticancer activities
 - [Helps in diabetes](#) - Moringa helps in controlling diabetes by reducing blood glucose levels immediately after taking it.
 - [Wound healing activity](#) - The extracts (aqueous) from Moringa showed significant healing actions.
 - [Cardiac and circulatory stimulant](#)- The bioactive compound alkaloids from Moringa trees act as a cardiac stimulant, stabilize blood pressure, have diuretic activity, and reduce fat and cholesterol.
 - [Analgesic and antipyretic](#) - Different parts of Moringa trees (leaves, pod, roots, etc.) showed analgesic activity.
 - [Liver protection](#) - Moringa leaf extracts help in reducing liver fibrosis and liver damage.
- Note:** Moringa may cause food-drug interactions with thyroid, diabetic, and blood pressure medications.

MEDICAL UPDATE

Coughing is part of the body's defense against disease. It pushes out bacteria, mucus, and foreign particles from the respiratory tract to protect the lungs from infection and inflammation. While coughing has a purpose, it should not be neglected, and medical attention may be required.

PREVENTIVE PEARLS

Some home remedies for seasonal cough:

- **Honey:** Honey is a natural cough suppressant. It can help soothe your throat and reduce irritation.
- **Turmeric milk:** Drinking a glass of milk with 1/2 teaspoon of turmeric twice daily can help clear your throat and soothe your cough.
- **Ginger:** Ginger has anti-inflammatory properties that can help relieve a dry or asthmatic cough. It may also relieve nausea associated with coughing
- **Garlic:** Boiling a clove of garlic with milk and adding a pinch of turmeric to it can help heal and soothe your throat
- **Steam:** Inhaling steam from hot water can help loosen mucus in your chest and relieve coughing
- **Fluids:** Drinking plenty of fluids can help keep your respiratory system healthy and reduce your risk of developing a cough

Please note that these remedies are not a substitute for medical treatment. If you have a persistent cough, seek medical attention immediately.

"Health isn't about being "perfect" with food or exercise or herbs. Health is about balancing those things with your desires. It's about nourishing your spirit as well as your body."

-- Golda Poretsky.

Importance of fiber in your diet.

Dietary fiber, also known as roughage, is the indigestible part of plant foods. Fiber is mostly in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes.

Fiber is a type of carbohydrate that the body can't digest.

There are two types of fiber: soluble and insoluble.

- **Soluble fiber**, which dissolves in water, can help lower glucose levels as well as lower blood cholesterol. Foods with soluble fiber include oatmeal, chia seeds, nuts, beans, lentils, apples, and blueberries.
- **Insoluble fiber** does not dissolve in water and adds bulk to the stool, preventing constipation. Foods with insoluble fibers include whole wheat products (especially wheat bran), quinoa, brown rice, legumes, leafy greens like kale, almonds, walnuts, seeds, and fruits with edible skins like pears and apples.

The human body digests food through a combination of two processes: mechanical digestion and chemical digestion. Mechanical digestion involves the physical breaking down of food particles. This process begins in the mouth with chewing and continues in the stomach, where the stomach muscles grind the food particles. Chemical digestion also begins in the mouth, where the enzymes in the saliva break down complex food particles. The stomach produces enzymes and acid that continue the chemical digestion, and enzymes in the small intestine complete the process. Dietary fibers escape digestion in the upper gastrointestinal tract and are fermented by bacteria in the colon. In the large intestine, soluble fiber dissolves in water to form a gel-like paste.

The gel-like paste softens stool and helps slow the movement of the digested material through the digestive tract, thus increasing nutrient absorption. The insoluble fiber remains undigested, adds bulk to the stool, and attracts water, making the stool softer so that it can move through the colon with ease.

Because your body cannot digest fiber, it doesn't provide calories for energy or nutrients for cells.

A high-fiber diet:

- **Regulates bowel movements.** Dietary fiber increases the weight and size of your stool and softens it, decreasing your chance of constipation. If you have loose, watery stools, fiber may help to solidify the stool because it absorbs water and adds bulk to the stool.
- **Maintains bowel health.** A high-fiber diet may lower your risk of developing hemorrhoids (piles) and small pouches in your colon (diverticular disease). A high-fiber diet also lowers the risk of colorectal cancer.
- **Lowers the risk of heart disease.** Soluble fiber may help lower blood cholesterol levels by lowering low-density lipoprotein, or "bad," cholesterol levels. High-fiber foods may have other heart-health benefits, such as reducing blood pressure and inflammation.
- **Helps control blood sugar levels.** In people with diabetes, fiber—particularly soluble fiber—can slow the absorption of sugar and help improve blood sugar levels.
- **Aids in achieving a healthy weight.** High-fiber foods tend to be more filling than low-fiber foods, so you're likely to eat less and stay satisfied longer. Also, high-fiber foods tend to take longer to eat and to be less "energy dense," which means they have fewer calories for the same volume of food.

Your best fiber choices

Whole-grain products
Vegetables
Fruits
Beans, peas and other legumes
Nuts and seeds

Refined or processed foods are lower in fiber. The grain-refining process removes the outer coat (bran) from the grain, which lowers its fiber content. Enriched foods have some of the B vitamins and iron added back after processing, but not the fiber.

Whole foods rather than fiber supplements are generally better. The added fiber usually is labeled as "inulin" or "chicory root."

High-fiber foods are good for your health. However, adding too much fiber too quickly can promote intestinal gas, abdominal bloating, and cramping. Increase fiber in your diet gradually over a few weeks. This allows the natural bacteria in your digestive system to adjust to the change. Also, drink plenty of water. Fiber works best when it absorbs water, making your stool soft and bulky.

Women should try to eat at least 21 to 25 grams of fiber a day, while men should aim for 30 to 38 grams a day.

END NOTE

Eat more fruit and vegetables. Try to eat five or more servings daily.

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