

GO!

WITH FIBRE

**OR... HOW
TO EAT
WELL
TO IMPROVE
BOWEL
FUNCTION**



Association for Spina Elifida and Hydrocephalus
42 Park Road, Peterborough PE1 2UQ
Tel: 01733 555988 Fax: 01733 555985
On the Web – <http://www.asbah.demon.co.uk/>

CHILDREN and adults with Spina Bifida have very specific needs - these needs include special care with the diet for proper bowel management. By controlling those dreaded "accidents", you can be free to be more confident and active in daily activities.

A lot of fibre and enough fluids need to be included in your diet to promote good bowel management. Sometimes certain types of foods you eat can have a negative effect on your bowel programme. This leaflet will give you some dietary suggestions for good bowel management.

FIBRE

A high fibre diet is needed for good bowel management. Fibre is often called "bulk" or "roughage". This is because one type of fibre called "insoluble" fibre (found in whole grain foods) is not digested. It helps to keep the foods you eat moving through your digestive tract at a good speed or transit time.

Another type of fibre called "soluble" fibre (found in oatmeal, fruits and vegetables) is compared to a sponge. Like a sponge, soluble fibre holds fluid so it keeps stools soft. Being careful to get enough soluble fibre and fluids everyday prevents hard stools. These may, in turn, result in the need for enemas, suppositories or washouts.

Children and adults need a good balanced diet which includes about 20 - 40 grams of fibre each day. A high fibre diet is a normal diet — except it is high in foods which provide bulk (fruits, vegetables and whole grain products).

WATER

Drink lots of water. Fibre, especially soluble, absorbs large amounts of water. A high fibre diet can actually cause constipation unless you drink enough water.

About 6 - 8 cups of liquid a day is recommended. Low calorie drinks are best, such as:

- water ● hot or cold decaffeinated tea
- diluted fruit juices ● flavoured carbonated water.

OVERALL DIET

Sometimes children and adults alike have problems with certain foods that cause diarrhoea and bowel accidents.

It is helpful to identify what foods may be causing problems, so you can limit or eliminate them from your diet. Some common examples of foods that cause problems (in large amounts) are:

High fat foods : butter sauces, mayonnaise, gravy, fried foods, full fat milk

Or:

sweetcorn : grapes : raisins : chocolate
(and other caffeine-containing foods like coffee, tea, colas).

FOODS WHICH WILL HELP YOU IN PLANNING YOUR HIGH FIBRE DIET

VEGETABLES 4 servings daily

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|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asparagus *Broccoli Brussel Sprouts *Carrots *Cabbage Cauliflower Celery *Corn Avocado Lettuce Green Beans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mushrooms Onions Parsnips *Peas (all kinds) Peppers Potatoes in their skins Radishes Rhubarb Spinach *Sweet Potatoes Tomatoes Turnips Watercress |
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FATS in limited amounts

- Butter
- Margarine
- Cream
- Salad Oil
- Salad dressing
- Gravy

BREAD 3-5 servings daily

- 100% whole wheat bread
- Rye Bread
- *Oatmeal Bread
- Bran muffins

FRUIT 3-5 servings daily

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Apples in their skins Apricots *Bananas Blackberries Cherries Dried fruit *Figs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Grapefruits *Oranges *Peaches *Pears *Pineapples *Plums *Prunes Raspberries Strawberries |
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DESSERT As required

- Fruit (fresh, frozen, canned)
- Fruit whips
- *Oatmeal cookies
- *Fig bars

* = GOOD SOURCES
OF SOLUBLE FIBRE

BEANS AND PULSES

- *Baked beans
- *Dried beans
- *Kidney beans
- *Lentils

PROTEIN 2-3 servings daily

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beef Veal Lamb Fish Ham Turkey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pork Eggs Chicken Peanut butter (crunchy) *Mature beans or peas Soya or Tofu |
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CEREAL 1 serving daily

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Oatmeal Shredded Wheat *Whole-grain cereal *Bran cereal Puffed Wheat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Oat bran Raw unprocessed bran Brown Rice Whole-grain pasta Weetabix |
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SOUP As desired

- *Hearty varieties (eg vegetables, bean, minestrone, chowder and chilli).

MISCELLANEOUS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserves Marmalades Sunflower seeds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pumpkin seeds *Popcorn Nuts |
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TIPS TO INCREASE FIBRE IN YOUR DIET

1. Read food labels. Good sources of fibre have at least 1 gram dietary fibre in one serving.
2. In breads or pastry, use whole grain flours, corn meal and bran in place of white flour.
3. Thicken sauces with whole grain flour, bran or puréed cooked dried peas, beans or lentils.
4. Put sauces over high fibre brown rice or wholemeal pasta instead of over mashed potatoes, pasta or white rice.
5. Instead of the standard meat-potato-vegetable meal, make casseroles and use high fibre vegetables, corn, peas and dried peas, beans and lentils.
6. Increase fibre gradually. Too much can cause wind, cramps and diarrhoea, resulting in discouragement.

It's a good idea to keep track of the variety and amounts of foods eaten. A food diary will be helpful to look back on as you try to pinpoint problems in the diet.

SO, REMEMBER...

Good health habits – including regular meal times, fibre, fluids and identifying problem foods in the diet – will all help you in bowel management. It is important to follow your schedule of bowel emptying faithfully.

Whatever you are doing, whether you are on holiday, at school, or work, nothing should prevent you from emptying properly!

Bowel management is the way to organise your natural body functions to prevent "accidents".

Bowel management helps you to be more independent so that you are

FREE TO BE YOU!

HABBA



ASBAH, National Centre

ASBAH House
42 Park Road
Peterborough
PE1 2UQ

Tel: 01733-555988 Fax: 01733-555985
email: postmaster@asbah.demon.co.uk
website – <http://www.asbah.demon.co.uk/>

ASBAH South East

209 Crescent Road
New Barnet
Herts EN4 8SB
Tel: 0181-449 0475
Fax: 0181- 440 6168

ASBAH East

42 Park Road
Peterborough
PE1 2UQ
Tel: 01733-555988
Fax: 01733-555985

ASBAH North

ASBAH House North
64 Bagley Lane, Farsley
Leeds, W Yorks LS28 5LY
Tel: 0113-255 6767
Fax: 0113-236 3747

ASBAH Northern Ireland

Graham House
Knockbracken Healthcare Park
Sainfield Road
Belfast BT8 8BH
Tel: 01232-798878
Fax: 01232-797071

ASBAH

Registered Charity Number 249338