



Fiber is an important part of a healthy diet. Fiber comes from plant-based foods like fruits, vegetables, dry beans, and whole grains. Fiber provides many health benefits, including helping prevent constipation, lowering **cholesterol**, and controlling **blood sugar** in people with diabetes.

Try these tips for increasing your daily fiber intake!

Instead of just...	Add this...
Plain oatmeal	Berries and milk
A turkey sandwich on wheat	Lettuce and tomato, and a side of fresh fruit
A plain side salad	Carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, and celery, with a whole grain roll
Vanilla yogurt	Fresh fruit

## Fill up on Fiber!

**Oatmeal** a great source of fiber and can be easy to include in your diet. It does not need to be just a breakfast food. It can be a filling meal or snack anytime of day.

### Selection:

- Choose bags or containers that are free from any damage.
- Check the “Best by” or “Best if used by” date on the package.

### Storage:

- Store unopened bags of oats in a cool, clean, dry place.
- After opening, keep the package tightly closed, or transfer to a sealable plastic bag or container.
- Oatmeal will stay fresh for one year as long as it is tightly sealed. After this time, the quality may lessen but it should still be safe to eat.

### Nutrition: 1/2 cup of **uncooked oatmeal**:

- Provides 150 calories, 5g of protein, and 4g of fiber
- Is very low in fat, cholesterol, and sodium and is a good source of iron
- Counts as one ounce serving from the MyPlate Grain group (goal is five to six ounces per day)

### Uses:

- Cook with low-fat or non-fat milk instead of water and top with yogurt for added protein and calcium.
- Top with a variety of fruit like berries, apples, or bananas to make a sweet and fiber-rich breakfast.
- Add oats to your favorite baked goods, such as cookies, muffins, and breads.
- Replace breadcrumbs with oats in meatloaf dishes.



# Easy Access to Food Assistance

## The Iowa Food Bank Association Hotline

Food Assistance helps many older Iowans remain independent. Food assistance provides the funds needed to purchase nutrient-rich foods that help you stay well-nourished, healthy and strong. All of which are necessary in order to remain independent.

Using food assistance allows you to have extra funds to use toward housing costs, medications, and even the occasional social outing.

The Iowa Food Bank Association can help you apply for Food Assistance. Call **1-855-944-FOOD (3663)**, to speak with someone who can help with the Food Assistance Application. The hotline is open **Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.**



### Oatmeal Pancakes

**Serves: 3**

**Serving Size: 2 pancakes** (3 inches in diameter)



#### **Ingredients:**

**1/2 cup oatmeal**

1/2 cup "Just Add Water" pancake mix

3/4 cup water

Topping of your choice (e.g., fruit or yogurt)

#### **Instructions:**

1. Combine pancake mix and oatmeal.
2. Stir in water.
3. Make pancakes as directed on the package. Use 1/4 cup measure to make 3-inch pancakes.
4. Add toppings and enjoy!

Add an egg and a glass of milk to your oatmeal pancakes to create a full meal that can be enjoyed for breakfast, lunch, or dinner!

**Nutritional analysis (2 pancakes, no toppings):** 130 calories, 1.5g fat, 0g saturated, 0g trans, 290mg sodium, 25g carbohydrates, 2g fiber, 4g sugar, 4g protein

This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart Eat Smart website, <http://www.extension.iastate.edu>

### **Helpful Resources**

Polk County Congregate Meals  
(515) 286-3679

Commodity and Supplemental Foods  
(515) 286-3655

Nutrition, Food Preparation and Food Safety  
ISU AnswerLine  
1-800-262-3804

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