


Fiber: Why It Matters & How to Get Enough

Fiber is one of the most practical things you can add to your diet during recovery — especially because most antipsychotic medications affect your gut. Getting enough fiber helps with constipation, appetite, and long-term health.

 **A note for people taking clozapine**

Eating fiber-rich foods as described in this sheet is still encouraged. However, clozapine significantly slows gut movement in a way that dietary changes alone are unlikely to fully manage. Talk to your doctor about an effective plan for you.

“Constipation is one of the most common side effects of antipsychotic medication — and one of the most under-talked about. For most people taking antipsychotics, fiber and water are the best everyday tools for managing it.”

WHY IT MATTERS WITH FEP

Most antipsychotics slow gut movement, making constipation one of the most common and uncomfortable side effects. Fiber is one of the most effective dietary tools for most people on antipsychotics.

FIBER HELPS DIRECTLY

Getting enough fiber each day supports bowel regularity and helps you feel fuller for longer — important when medication increases your appetite. (See clozapine note above.)

BEYOND CONSTIPATION

Fiber also supports blood sugar and cholesterol levels, which are important because antipsychotics can affect metabolic health over time.

WHAT FIBER DOES — AND WHY IT MATTERS

RELIEVES CONSTIPATION FROM MOST ANTIPSYCHOTICS

Most antipsychotics slow the movement of your gut. Fiber adds bulk to stool and keeps things moving — one of the most effective dietary tools for managing this. **Note: if you take clozapine, see the important note above.**

HELPS YOU FEEL FULL FOR LONGER

When medication increases your appetite, fiber-rich foods help you feel satisfied after meals. Aim for **25–30 grams of fiber per day** — most people get less than half this amount.

SUPPORTS BLOOD SUGAR AND CHOLESTEROL

Antipsychotics can affect blood sugar and cholesterol over time. A high-fiber diet helps manage both — reducing long-term metabolic risks from medication.

TWO IMPORTANT TIPS

1. ADD FIBER SLOWLY

Adding too much too quickly causes bloating or gas. Introduce one new high-fiber food at a time over a few weeks.

2. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

Fiber works best with fluids. Aim for **6–8 glasses of water per day**. Without enough water, fiber can make constipation worse, not better.

HOW TO ADD MORE FIBER — FOOD SOURCES

- Fruits:** Apples, pears, oranges, berries
- Vegetables:** Carrots, broccoli, peas, spinach, sweet potato
- Whole grains:** Oatmeal, brown rice, whole-wheat bread, popcorn, quinoa
- Beans & lentils:** Black beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils
- Nuts & seeds:** Almonds, chia seeds, flaxseeds, sunflower seeds

EXAMPLE ONE-DAY MENU

Meal	Food	Fiber
Breakfast	Oatmeal with berries	6 g
Snack	Apple with skin	4 g
Lunch	Turkey sandwich on whole-wheat bread + side salad	5 g
Snack	Handful of almonds	3 g
Dinner	Grilled chicken, brown rice, broccoli	6 g
Total		~24 g

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Aim for 25–30 grams of fiber daily
 - ✓ Choose whole plant foods more often
 - ✓ Increase fiber gradually — one food at a time
 - ✓ Stay well hydrated — fiber needs water to work
- Small changes make a big difference — start with one fiber-rich food today.**