



FOOD TO HEAL • 009

Beta-glucan

Support your gut health with a
diet rich in beta-glucan



Increasing Dietary Intake of Beta-glucan

Beta-glucan is a type of dietary fibre found in the outer layers of certain plants such as oats and barley, as well as some yeasts, bacteria, fungi, and algae.

Beta-glucan can influence how quickly food moves through your intestines, which may help you feel fuller for longer. Beneficial bacteria in your gut microbiome feed on beta-glucan to create short chain fatty acids, which are linked to a range of health benefits.

Foods high in beta-glucan*

	Oat	Barley	Other grains
Best	 • ½ cup oats, uncooked • ¾ cup oat porridge, cooked • 1 tbsp oat bran	• 2 x barley Mountain Bread • ¼ cup pearled or whole grain barley, uncooked	
High	  • ½ cup oat flakes cereal, uncooked • ¼ cup granola or muesli • 1 oat-based cereal bar (45g)	• 1 slice of BARLEYmax®-fortified bread: • Bakers Delight Prebiotic Cape Seed Loaf • Alpine Spelt & Barley Bread • Coles Happy Gut Wholemeal Bread	• ½ cup wheat bran cereal (85%) • 2 x rye Mountain Bread • 2 x Ryvita • Sorghum products e.g. Gluten-free Weet-bix (2 biscuits), ¼ cup grain
Moderate	  • 1 oat-based biscuit (28g)	• 1 slice Helga's Prebiotic Barley Bread	• 1 tbsp wheat bran • 1 slice multigrain bread

*Please note the beta-glucan content may vary depending on factors such as growing conditions, ripeness, and processing methods.

How to add beta-glucan to your diet:

- Start with oats. Try porridge or overnight oats for breakfast, add oats to smoothies or include them in baking.
- Add barley to soups and stews or pre-cooked to salads.
- Try rye or barley Mountain Bread wraps for lunch with your favourite sandwich fillings.
- With a variety of BARLEYmax® fortified products available, switch out your usual bread for one of their bread varieties listed in the food table.
- Top Ryvita crispbreads with avocado, tomato, or tuna, for a quick easy snack.

Increasing fibre intake:

1. Gradually increase fibre intake to allow the digestive system to adjust.
2. Stay well-hydrated as consuming more fibre without sufficient water may cause gastrointestinal blockage.
3. Expect some mild symptoms such as gas and bloating as a sign your gut microbiome is adjusting to the increased fibre intake. It is not necessarily a sign of intolerance.
4. If you get gut symptoms, slightly reduce your fibre intake for a few days before slowly increasing as tolerated.

Recipe ideas

Overnight oats (serves 1)

Ingredients:

- ½ cup rolled oats
- ½ cup milk of your choice
- 2 tbsp chia seeds
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ cup diced apple or strawberry

Method:

1. Thoroughly mix all ingredients in a glass container.
2. Cover the container with a lid or beeswax wrap and place in the refrigerator overnight.
3. Enjoy straight from the container the next morning.



Vegetable barley soup (serves 4)

Ingredients:

- 6 cups salt-reduced vegetable stock
- 1 diced brown onion
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 1 cup pearly barley
- 1 cup of green beans, chopped into halves
- 350g sweet potato, chopped into 1cm cubes
- 4 medium carrots, chopped into 1cm cubes
- 2 celery stems, chopped into 1cm cubes
- 400g can diced tomatoes
- 1 dried bay leaf
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp mixed herbs
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tbsp olive oil

Method:

1. Rinse barley in a colander and leave to drain.
2. Heat oil in a large pot and add onion, green beans, sweet potato, carrots and celery. Sauté for 5 minutes, stirring regularly.
3. Add the mixed herbs, bay leaf, garlic, salt and pepper to the pot. Stir for 1 minute.
4. Add the rinsed pearly barley, diced tomatoes and vegetable stock. Stir to combine, then bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes or until barley is cooked (chewy but not hard in the middle).
5. Stir in the parsley leaves.
6. Ladle into bowls and serve with your favourite wholemeal bread.



Oat breakfast bars (8 large bars)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup wholemeal flour
- 1 ½ cup milk of your choice
- ½ cup unsweetened apple purée
- 3 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 tbsp nut butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 medium banana, diced
- 1 large egg
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 190°C.
2. Line an 8x8 pan with baking paper.
3. In a large bowl, thoroughly mix the apple purée, milk, maple syrup, egg, peanut butter, and vanilla extract.
4. In a medium bowl, thoroughly mix the oats, flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.
5. Pour the dry ingredients into the wet mixture and mix thoroughly.
6. Stir in the diced banana.
7. Pour the mixture into the baking pan.
8. Bake for 35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
9. Once cooled, cut into 8 bars.



Adding foods high in beta-glucan gives your daily diet a fibre boost that can help feed your gut microbiome and support overall better health.