

Medical Minute

FIBER

I know you have heard of soluble and insoluble fiber, but do you really know what each one is and what they can do? Yeah, I didn't know either. So, here's the scoop.

Soluble fiber is plentiful in beans, oats, some vegetables, most fruits and whole grains. After eating they take on a gelatinous consistency that makes you feel fuller and less inclined to overeat. It also helps to lower insulin and cholesterol levels (still don't care about the cholesterol.)

Insoluble fiber is found in whole grains, beans, most vegetables and some fruits. Insoluble fiber absorbs water making stools softer and bulkier which, in theory, may reduce the risk of colon cancer by speeding waste through the colon.

Since to me the two types of fiber seem to be found in the same foods, you need to look up which fruit or vegetable, for example, has more of the type of fiber you need. Feel fuller, or empty quicker—you decide. Or, maybe the distance to a bathroom may decide for you!

It's interesting and confusing to me how the same foods can have the same ingredient...fiber...but it does different things. I would think that they would cancel each other out, but, what do I know?

