

# SMART BITES

Eating Well Without Spending a Lot of Time or Money!

February 2015



## ALL ABOUT FIBER

*Fiber is a nutrient found in food that is not digested by the body but helps to maintain overall health. Fiber helps to bulk up stool, which aids in digestion and maintaining digestive health.*

### Why is fiber so important?

Fiber can be an easy and cheap nutrient to increase in the diet and it can have numerous health benefits. By helping to reduce blood cholesterol levels, fiber can help to reduce a person's risk for heart disease. Fiber promotes feelings of fullness, which in turn can help in maintaining a healthy weight by reducing overeating. Fiber is found in foods that are generally high in other nutrients and lower in calories, which makes high fiber foods an excellent addition to any daily routine.

### Health Benefits of Fiber

- ✓ Helps maintain regular bowel movements
- ✓ Helps maintain a healthy digestive system
- ✓ Helps maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Reduces the risk of diabetes and heart disease
- ✓ Helps to reduce blood cholesterol levels
- ✓ Helps to slow the absorption of sugar and maintain healthy blood sugar levels



### Tips to Increase Fiber:

- ✓ Increase whole grain choices
- ✓ Increase fruit and vegetable consumption
- ✓ Choose beans and nuts as a protein source over meat
- ✓ Choose fruits and vegetables as snacks
- ✓ Increase dietary fiber gradually and drink plenty of water to prevent constipation

**Fiber is found in plant-based foods, such as:**

Fruits    Whole Grains  
Vegetables    Nuts  
Beans    Seeds

**Recommended Daily Intake:**

Women: 25g per day  
Men: 38g per day

Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County, Middletown, NY 10940 845-344-1234 [cceaorangecounty.org](http://cceaorangecounty.org)

Family and Consumer Sciences offers additional parenting, nutrition and financial management programs and resources.

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*The SNAP-Ed Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact a SNAP-Ed Program Office near you or visit [www.mybenefits.gov](http://www.mybenefits.gov)*

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## Recipe of the Month

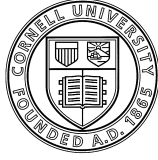
### *Black Bean Burgers*

- 1 15.5 ounce can low-sodium black beans  
(drained and rinsed with cold water)
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup cooked brown rice
- 2 scallions (green and white minced about 1/4 cup)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro  
(or basil leaves or a combination)
- 1 clove garlic (peeled and minced)
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano or basil
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 whole-wheat buns

Wash hands. Add beans to a bowl and mash with a fork until chunky. Add the egg and mix well. Add precooked rice, scallions, garlic and oregano, salt and pepper and mix until well combined. Divide the mixture into 4 portions and form each portion into a patty about 3/4 to 1 inch thick. Place a large skillet on the stove on high heat. When the skillet is hot, add oil. Add burgers and cook 4 to 5 minutes per side until browned on both sides and heated throughout. Place on a whole wheat bun. Makes 4 servings. Per serving (about 3oz): calories 274; total fat 5g (1g saturated fat); protein 13g; carbohydrates 47g; dietary fiber 12g; sodium 668mg.

Source: USDA Recipes at [www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/myplate-cnpp/black-bean-burgers](http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/myplate-cnpp/black-bean-burgers)

Makes 4 Servings  
Total Cost: \$2.93  
Serving Cost: \$ 0.73

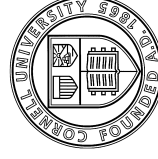


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