Sources of pectin (soluble fiber)? [1]

Alice,

I was told to eat foods with pectin. All I know is that apples have pectin. Do any other foods contain pectin?

Answer

Dear Reader,

You can add citrus fruits such as lemons, oranges, and grapefruits to your list of pectin-rich foods. Strawberries and other fruits and vegetables also contain some pectin, but not as much as apples and fruits in the citrus family. Pectin is also added to certain foods, such as jams/jellies, because it acts as a thickening agent since it becomes gel-like when dissolved in water.

Pectin is a water-soluble dietary fiber. It can be found in most plants. Pectin slows the passage of food through the intestine and helps to lower blood cholesterol levels. In the intestine, it’s believed that pectin fibers bind to bile (produced by the liver from cholesterol), which is then excreted from the body. Evidence supports the use of pectin for treating diarrhea, while studies are also being conducted to determine pectin’s potential benefits for preventing and treating certain types of cancer.

For additional information on fiber, check out the Related Q&As below.

It might be a good idea to seek further guidance from a nutritionist. If you are a Columbia student on the Morningside campus, you can make an appointment with a nutritionist by calling 212-854-2284 or logging on to Open Communicator [2]. If you are on the Medical Center campus, you can reach out to the Center for Student Wellness [3] or Student Health [4].

Happy hunting!

Alice!

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