

Consuming Thoughts

by

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Americans eat far too little fiber in their diets. The recommended daily allowance of fiber is between 20-30 grams a day. However, the average American only eats about 10 grams of fiber a day.

It is important to understand the types of fiber and its food sources in order to lead a healthier lifestyle.

There are two types of fiber, soluble and insoluble. Forms of soluble fiber include gums, mucilages, and pectins.

Soluble fiber slows down the rate that the stomach empties food, which makes your stomach feel full for a longer period of time. This effect could help fight off obesity since the body doesn't feel as hungry. It lowers cholesterol, because its gel-like substances bind to cholesterol and excrete it out of the body and it also helps control blood sugar levels in diabetics.

Forms of insoluble fibers include hemicellulose, cellulose, and lignin. Insoluble fiber absorbs

water thereby increasing and softening stools and speeding them through the digestive tract. This is helpful in preventing and treating constipation and has been prescribed for the treatment of diverticular disease. It may also reduce the risk of colon cancer.

Sources of food containing soluble fiber include oatmeal, oat bran, fried beans and peas, squash, apples, citrus fruits, green beans, cabbage, and strawberries.

Sources of foods containing insoluble fiber include bran, cereals, whole grains, whole wheat, Brussels sprouts, peppers, green beans, cabbage broccoli and cucumber skins.

Boost up fiber in your diet by trying the following recipe.

Mom's Molasses Muffins

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup molasses
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 cup bran cereal
- 1/2 cup raisins

Stir together flour, soda, salt, and sugar. Set aside. Measure bran cereal and buttermilk into large mixing bowl. Stir to combine. Let

Is Chickenpox Vaccine Needed?

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — "When I was young everybody had chickenpox and we survived it," is a common refrain from patients as well as many physicians.

Proper immunization protects us from morbidity as well as mortality. It's true that the vaccine may save only about 100 lives per year which is not insignificant but we'll also reduce hospitalizations by almost 10,000 each year and complications in the thousands. In addition nearly 4,000,000 cases of misery can be avoided. Children and adults miss up to two weeks of school or

work while ill and in households with multiple children this loss is compounded.

Three independent studies confirm an economic benefit of \$100 per vaccine based on cost/benefit analysis. The vaccine is nearly 100 percent effective against severe disease and its complications. Breakthrough cases occur in a fair percentage (15-20 percent of those vaccinated but these are mild and also boost immunity. Enough data is now available to document a decreased incidence of shingles after the vaccine as compared to after the natural disease.

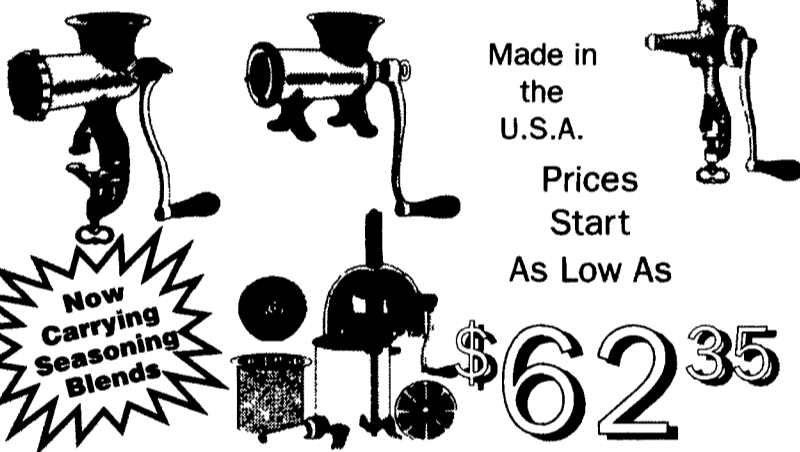
Immunity from the chickenpox shot should be life-long since it is a live vaccine. Experience in Japan of nearly 25 years seems to confirm this expectation. Vaccinating all children will protect those older adults who may be susceptible to both chickenpox and shingles.

In fact, a more potent vaccine may be offered to adults to prevent shingles in the near future. Concern that children will get varicella as adults may be a self-fulfilling prophesy if we do not get 90 percent of them immunized which is needed to prevent epidemics by herd immunity.

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