

Fiber-Rich Filipino Food Guide

Why fiber is your most powerful food tool — and how to get enough of it from everyday Filipino meals. Covers kidney disease, diabetes, constipation, gout, and more.



25 g

Women target / day

38 g

Men target / day

14–18 g

Average Filipino gets

~30%

↓ Heart disease risk

14 g

= 1,000 kcal rule of thumb

Most Filipinos get only 14–18 g/day — roughly half the recommended target. Adding monggo soup 3× a week can close that gap.

1 The Two Types of Fiber — and What Each One Does

Soluble Fiber

Dissolves in water → forms a thick gel in your gut

How it works: the gel slows stomach emptying, traps bile acids (cholesterol), and buffers glucose absorption.

- ✓ **Lowers LDL cholesterol** — traps bile acids so the liver must pull LDL from blood to make new ones.
- ✓ **Flattens blood sugar spikes** — slows carb absorption after every meal.
- ✓ **Feeds gut bacteria** → they produce short-chain fatty acids (butyrate, propionate) that reduce inflammation.

Filipino sources: oatmeal (beta-glucan), okra (mucilage), monggo / beans (pectin), guava (pectin), chia seeds, psyllium

Insoluble Fiber

Does NOT dissolve → adds bulk and speed to stool

How it works: absorbs water like a sponge, expands stool, and speeds transit through the colon.

- ✓ **Prevents and treats constipation** — softens stool, reduces straining.
- ✓ **Reduces colon cancer risk** — faster transit = less time for carcinogens to contact the colon wall.
- ✓ **Reduces uremic toxin load** — in CKD, faster transit reduces p-cresol and indoxyl sulfate production by gut bacteria.

Filipino sources: brown rice (bran), kamote skin, kangkong stems, corn kernels, whole wheat, sitaw, talong skin

Most whole Filipino foods contain **both types**. You don't need to track which is which — just eat a variety of whole plants every day. Whole prunes and psyllium husk contain both types in useful proportions.

2 Fiber's Three Jobs in Your Body

①

Adds Bulk & Speeds Transit

Insoluble fiber absorbs water in the large intestine, expanding stool and triggering peristaltic waves. Stool moves faster → less time for toxins to sit against the colon wall.

- ✓ **Softer stool · Faster transit · Less cancer contact time**

②

Slows Digestion & Absorption

Soluble fiber gel slows gastric emptying. Glucose enters the bloodstream more gradually → lower post-meal spikes. Bile acids get trapped in the gel → excreted instead of reabsorbed → liver pulls LDL from blood.

- ✓ **Flattens blood sugar · ↓ LDL cholesterol**

③

Feeds Gut Bacteria (Prebiotics)

Fiber ferments in the colon, feeding beneficial bacteria. They produce short-chain fatty acids: **butyrate** (fuels colon cells, reduces inflammation), **propionate** (tells liver to make less glucose), **acetate** (reduces appetite).

- ✓ **Healthy gut lining · ↓ Inflammation · ↓ Toxins in CKD**

3 Proven Health Benefits — What the Evidence Shows

Condition	What fiber does	Evidence	Best fiber source
Heart disease	↓ LDL 5–10% per 5–10 g soluble fiber/day; lowers blood pressure	Strong ✓✓✓	Oats, monggo, okra, psyllium
Type 2 Diabetes	↓ post-meal glucose spikes; improves insulin sensitivity over time; ↓ HbA1c 0.5–1%	Strong ✓✓✓	Oats, chia, monggo, okra, sitaw
Chronic Kidney Disease	↓ uremic toxins (p-cresol, indoxyl sulfate); slows CKD progression; ↓ inflammation	Moderate ✓✓	Oats, okra, psyllium, white rice + psyllium
Colon cancer	↓ risk ~10% per 10 g/day; faster transit = less carcinogen contact time	Strong ✓✓✓	Brown rice, kamote, whole vegetables
Constipation	Softens stool; reduces straining; more effective than stool softeners alone	Strong ✓✓✓	Psyllium (C-Lium), prunes, oats + water
Weight / obesity	Increases satiety; reduces total caloric intake; ↓ visceral fat over time	Moderate ✓✓	Any high-fiber whole food; chia in water
Mortality (all-cause)	Highest fiber intake quartile → ~15–20% lower all-cause mortality vs. lowest quartile	Strong ✓✓✓	Whole grains + legumes + vegetables daily

THE TWO TYPES OF FIBER — SOLUBLE VS INSOLUBLE

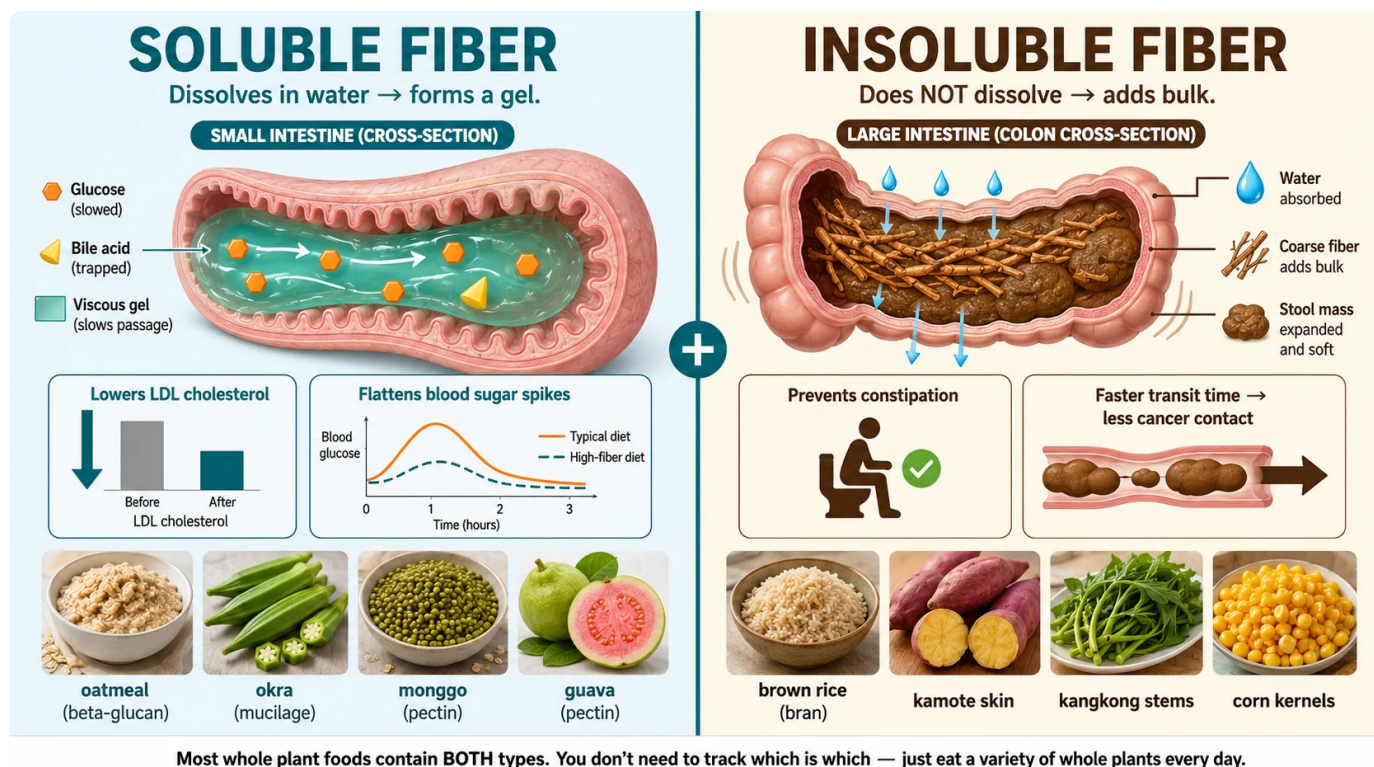
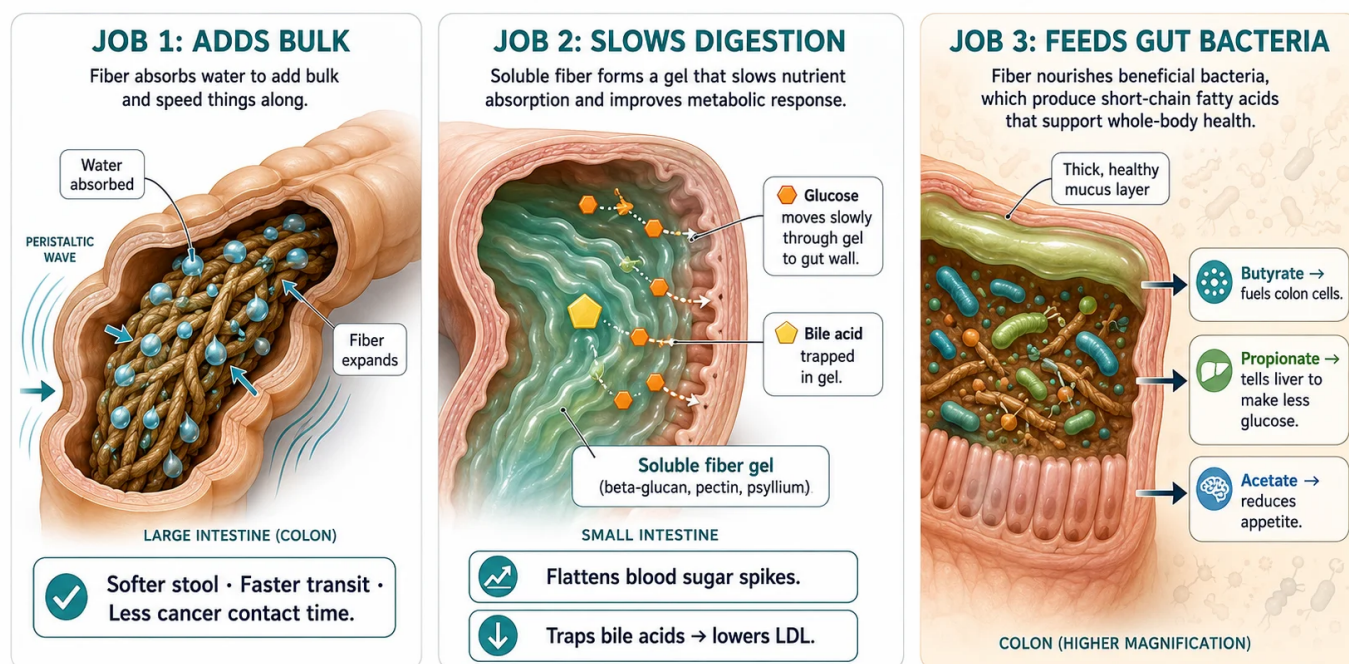


Fig. 1 — Soluble fiber (oats, monggo, okra) dissolves in water to form a gel that slows glucose absorption and lowers cholesterol. Insoluble fiber (kangkong, pechay, kamote skin) adds bulk and speeds gut transit. Most Filipino foods contain both — eat a variety for full benefit.

FIBER'S THREE JOBS IN YOUR BODY

Fiber travels from mouth → to colon.



Dietary Fiber — Three mechanisms, one extraordinary food component.

Fig. 2 — Fiber's three primary mechanisms: (1) slowing glucose absorption to reduce post-meal blood sugar spikes, (2) binding cholesterol in the gut to lower LDL, and (3) adding bulk to stool to prevent constipation — a common problem in CKD and dialysis patients.

THE FIBER MYTH — WHAT MOST PATIENTS GET WRONG

"A big green salad ≈ 2–3 g fiber. ½ cup monggo soup ≈ 8 g fiber. 1 medium guava ≈ 5 g fiber. Fiber ≠ volume of vegetables eaten."

Food (Filipino name)	Standard Serving	Fiber	K level	P level	CKD / Dialysis Note
VERY HIGH — ≥ 8 G FIBER PER SERVING · POWERHOUSE CHOICES					
Black beans (itim na beans, boiled)	½ cup cooked	15 g	HIGH	HIGH	CKD 4–5 / dialysis: Limit — leach before cooking, discuss amount with dietitian
Garbanzos / chickpeas (boiled)	½ cup cooked	12 g	HIGH	HIGH	CKD 4–5 / dialysis: Limit — high K and P; OK in small portions in earlier CKD
Chia seeds	2 tbsp (28 g)	10 g	LOW	MOD	Generally kidney-friendly in 1–2 tbsp doses; stir into lugaw, water, or oatmeal
Avocado / abokado (whole fruit)	1 whole	10 g	VERY HIGH	LOW	CKD 4–5 / dialysis: limit to ½ avocado — very high potassium despite low phosphorus
Monggo / mung beans (boiled)	½ cup cooked	8 g	MOD	MOD	CKD 4–5 / dialysis: limit portion; leach by boiling in fresh water; OK 2× / week
Prunes / dried plums	5–6 pieces (100 g)	7 g	HIGH	MOD	CKD 4–5 / dialysis: limit to 2–3 pieces — high potassium; good constipation remedy for earlier CKD
HIGH — 4–7 G FIBER PER SERVING · EXCELLENT EVERYDAY CHOICES					
Guava / bayabas (with skin)	1 medium	5 g	MOD	LOW	CKD 4–5 / dialysis: moderate K — limit to ½ guava; earlier CKD: excellent daily fruit
Saluyot / jute leaves (cooked)	1 cup cooked	5 g	LOW	LOW	Very kidney-friendly — low K and P; excellent leafy green for dialysis patients
Oatmeal / rolled oats (cooked)	1 cup cooked	4 g	LOW	LOW	Best staple carb for CKD + diabetes; beta-glucan lowers LDL; kidney-safe at 1 cup/day
Oat bran	½ cup cooked	6–8 g	LOW	LOW	Highest beta-glucan per gram; use in porridge or mix with oatmeal; kidney-friendly
Flaxseed / linseed (ground)	2 tbsp	5–6 g	LOW	MOD	Use ground form for absorption; omega-3 bonus; safe in CKD 1–3; limit in CKD 4–5
Brown rice	1 cup cooked	3.5 g	LOW	SLIGHTLY ↑	CKD: slightly more P than white rice; OK in CKD 1–3; white rice + psyllium preferred in CKD 4–5
MODERATE — 2–4 G FIBER PER SERVING · GOOD CONTRIBUTORS TO DAILY TOTAL					
Okra (steamed or in sinigang)	1 cup cooked	3.2 g	LOW	LOW	Safest high-fiber vegetable for CKD/dialysis; viscous mucilage also lowers blood sugar
Kamote / sweet potato (boiled)	1 medium (150 g)	3.8 g	MOD–HIGH	LOW	Boil and drain; leach in large water — reduces K by 30–50%; baking raises K; OK in CKD 1–3
Saba banana (boiled, slightly unripe)	1 medium	3.5 g	MOD	LOW	CKD 4–5: limit 1 piece; unripe = higher resistant starch + lower sugar + lower K than ripe
Malunggay / moringa leaves (cooked)	1 cup	3.5 g	LOW	LOW	Low K and P; anti-inflammatory; excellent in tinola, sinigang, and monggo; safe for CKD/dialysis
Sitaw / yard-long beans (cooked)	1 cup cooked	3 g	LOW	LOW	Low K and P; kidney-safe; pairs well with fish and rice; good everyday vegetable
Sampaloc / tamarind pulp (eaten)	¼ cup pulp	3–5 g	HIGH	LOW	Only if pulp is eaten — strained sinigang broth = 0 g fiber. High K in pulp; limit in CKD 4–5
Kangkong / water spinach (ginisa)	1 cup cooked	2.5 g	LOW	LOW	Safe for CKD/dialysis; good daily leafy green; sauté in small canola oil + garlic
Pako / fern salad	1 cup	2.5 g	LOW	LOW	Low K; generally safe; eat with vinegar-garlic dressing (no bagoong in CKD)
LOW — < 2 G FIBER PER SERVING · COUNT THESE AS BONUSES, NOT MAIN SOURCES					
Eggplant / talong (cooked)	1 cup cooked	2.5 g	LOW	LOW	Low K and P; kidney-safe; good in pinakbet and kare-kare
Pechay / bok choy (cooked)	1 cup cooked	2.5 g	LOW	LOW	Low K and P; very kidney-safe; good in sinigang and soups
Papaya / hinog na papaya	1 cup chunks	2.5 g	LOW–MOD	LOW	Low K; enzyme papain may aid digestion; OK for most CKD stages in normal portions
Pineapple / pinya (fresh)	1 cup chunks	2.3 g	LOW	LOW	Low K; bromelain enzyme; OK for CKD in moderation; avoid canned in syrup
Psyllium husk (C-Lium)	1 tsp in water	3–5 g	NONE	NONE	Best supplement for CKD/dialysis — zero K and P; take with 250 mL water at mealtime
White rice (kanin)	1 cup cooked	0.6 g	LOWEST	LOWEST	Lowest K and P of all staples — dialysis-safe; add psyllium or eat with monggo for fiber boost

K = potassium · P = phosphorus · Avocado value is for whole fruit · Sampaloc: 3–5 g only if pulp is eaten — strained sinigang broth = 0 g fiber · Leaching: boil in large volume water, discard water, repeat once — reduces potassium 30–50%.

FIBER VS VEGETABLES — WHY THEY ARE NOT THE SAME THING

**WHAT MOST PEOPLE THINK OF
AS “FIBER FOODS”**

A big salad (2 cups mixed greens
+ tomato + cucumber)



≈ 2–3 g fiber



High in water
(fills you up)



Rich in vitamins,
minerals, antioxidants



Low in fiber,
digests quickly

**WHAT ACTUALLY DELIVERS
HIGH FIBER**

1/2 cup monggo + 1/2 cup brown rice
+ pinakbet (mixed vegetables)



≈ 12–15 g fiber



Feeds gut
bacteria



Slows sugar
absorption



Protects heart,
colon, and kidneys



KEY TAKEAWAY: Fiber isn't just about volume — it's about the right food.
Beans, whole grains, and vegetables together deliver the fiber your body needs.



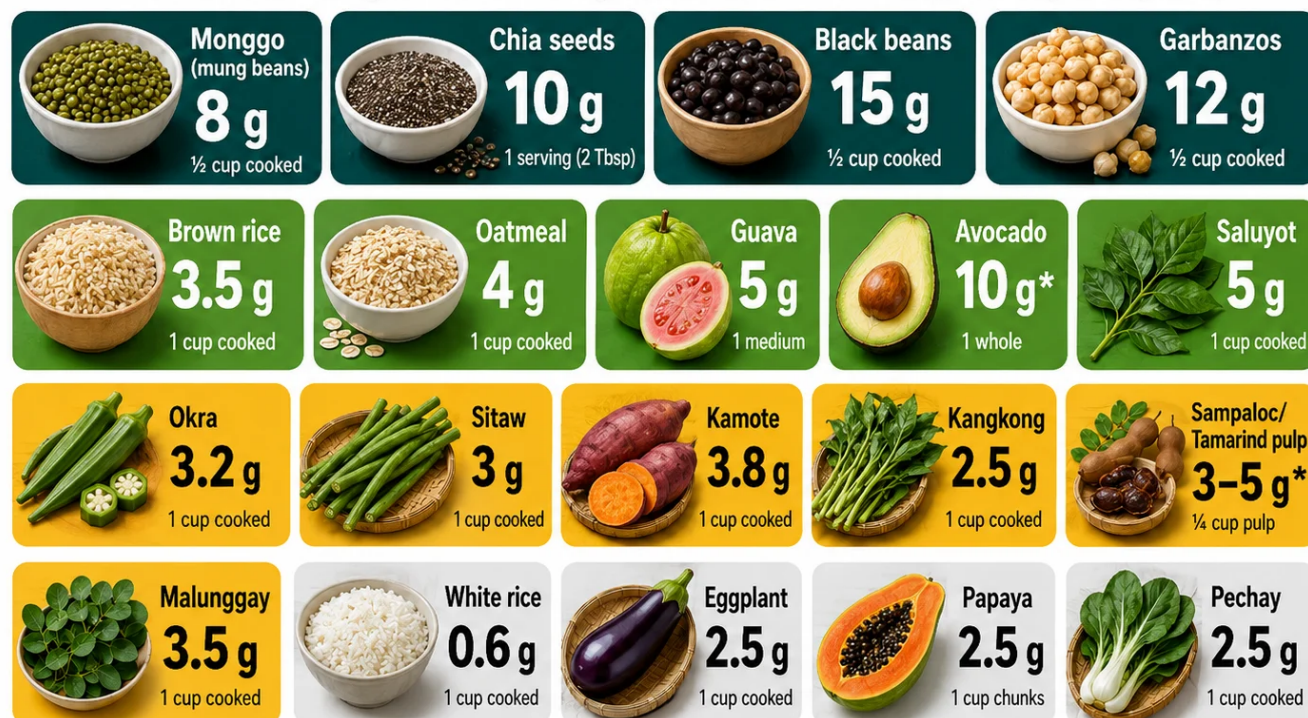
**Focus on whole foods.
Not just more salad.**

Fig. 3 — Many patients assume eating vegetables is enough to meet fiber targets — it is not. Leafy vegetables like kangkong and pechay are low in fiber per serving. High-fiber foods include legumes (monggo), root crops (kamote, gabi), and fruits with edible skins. For CKD patients, choose kidney-safe options with manageable potassium loads.

FILIPINO HIGH-FIBER FOODS MATRIX — FIBER CONTENT & CKD SUITABILITY

Filipino Foods Ranked by Fiber

Per standard serving (½ cup cooked legumes; 1 medium fruit; 1 cup cooked grain/vegetable)



Tip: Replace ½ cup white rice with monggo soup 3× a week → +16–24g fiber

* **Avocado note:** value shown is for a whole avocado, not per tablespoon.

* **Sampaloc note:** 3–5 g only if pulp is eaten. Strained sinigang broth = 0 g fiber.

Fig. 4 — Fiber content per standard serving for common Filipino foods, color-coded by CKD/dialysis suitability. Green = safe for most CKD patients. Yellow = use with caution (moderate potassium or phosphorus). Red = limit or avoid in advanced CKD or dialysis. Always confirm with your nephrologist.

Fiber IS Recommended

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

Fiber reduces uremic toxins **p-cresol and indoxyl sulfate** — produced when gut bacteria ferment undigested protein. These toxins accelerate CKD progression and worsen cardiovascular risk.

- **CKD Stage 1–3:** Eat normally from the full fiber table. Aim for 25–38 g/day. Monggo, okra, oats, and saluyot are excellent.
- **CKD Stage 4–5 / Pre-dialysis:** Check potassium. Low-K fiber options: **oats, psyllium husk (C-Lium), okra, kangkong, white rice + psyllium, pechay, saluyot.** Limit monggo, avocado, guava portions.
- **On Dialysis:** Same low-K rules. Psyllium and shirataki rice are ideal — zero potassium, zero phosphorus. Leach all vegetables before cooking.
- **How to leach:** Peel, slice thin, boil in large volume of water 15 min, drain, cook normally. Reduces K by 30–50%.

Best Dietary Tool for DM

Type 2 Diabetes

Soluble fiber is your single most powerful food tool. It slows carb absorption at **every meal**, flattening the glucose curve. Every gram counts.

- **Before or during meals:** oats, monggo, okra, chia — eaten before rice for maximum blunting effect.
- **3 g of beta-glucan/day** (≈ 1 cup cooked oatmeal + ½ cup okra) is recognized for cholesterol reduction and glucose modulation.
- **High-fiber meals reduce insulin resistance** over time — this is above and beyond the per-meal spike reduction.
- **Chia seeds:** 1 tbsp stirred into water 30 min before a meal → slows gastric emptying → blunts post-meal glucose rise.
- **Do NOT** count fruit juice as fiber — even fresh juice removes the fiber. Eat whole fruit.

Fiber + Water = Solution

Constipation

- **Best remedy: psyllium husk** (1 tsp in 250 mL water, 1–2× daily) — works as well as prescription laxatives in clinical trials. Must drink adequate water.
- **Whole prunes (5–6 pieces):** 7 g fiber + sorbitol → draws water into colon. As effective as psyllium. **CKD 4–5: limit to 2–3 pieces (high K).**
- **Prune juice:** only partly works — 2–3 g fiber, no sorbitol effect. Do NOT count toward daily fiber target.
- **Melon milk (pakwan + gatas):** NOT a remedy — melon is 90% water with <1 g fiber per cup. Adding milk gives protein, not fiber. Will not relieve constipation.
- Always increase fiber slowly (+5 g/week) and drink 8+ glasses of water/day. Going too fast causes bloating.

Legumes Are Safe — Keep Eating Them

Gout

MYTH: "Avoid monggo and beans — they cause gout."

FACT: Dietary purines in legumes have **minimal effect** on uric acid versus alcohol, fructose, and red meat. Large studies show legume intake does NOT significantly raise serum uric acid or gout attack rates.

- Monggo, beans, chickpeas — keep eating them for their fiber and protein benefits.
- **True gout triggers to reduce:** beer/alcohol, sweetened drinks (fructose), organ meats (liver, kidney), shellfish, red meat in excess.
- Higher fiber intake is associated with **lower uric acid levels** — possibly via improved insulin sensitivity and gut microbiome effects.

Fiber Prevents New Pockets

Diverticulosis / Diverticulitis

MYTH: "Avoid nuts and seeds if you have diverticulosis."

FACT: Old advice — now reversed. High fiber intake actually **prevents** new diverticula and reduces flare-up risk. Seeds and nuts are fine during remission.

- During an **acute flare (diverticulitis):** temporarily reduce insoluble fiber until inflammation settles, then gradually reintroduce.
- Long-term: aim for 25–38 g/day. Brown rice, whole vegetables, and oats are ideal maintenance foods.

Insoluble Fiber Helps

Kidney Stones (Calcium Oxalate)

Insoluble fiber binds oxalate in the gut **before** it is absorbed — reducing urinary oxalate, the main building block of calcium oxalate stones.

- Whole grains (brown rice, kamote) and non-starchy vegetables eaten **with meals** reduce oxalate absorption.
- **Do NOT restrict calcium** — calcium in food also binds gut oxalate. Low calcium intake paradoxically increases stone risk.
- Avoid spinach, kamote leaves, and star fruit (balimbing) — very high oxalate content regardless of fiber.
- Drink 2.5–3 L water/day — more important than fiber alone for stone prevention.

How to Safely Increase Your Fiber Intake — The 5-Step Plan

1

Add 5 g per week

Never jump from 14 g to 38 g overnight. Add one new fiber source per week. Gut bacteria need 2–4 weeks to adapt. Too fast = bloating and gas.

2

Drink 8+ glasses water

Fiber without water can cause constipation, not relieve it. Every gram of fiber needs water to do its job. Always increase both together.

3

Start with oats + okra

The easiest pair for most Filipinos: ½ cup oatmeal (4 g) + 1 cup okra in sinigang (3 g) = 7 g before lunch — kidney-safe for all CKD stages.

4

Swap rice 3× / week

Replace ½ cup white rice with ½ cup monggo soup 3× per week: adds 16–24 g fiber per week without changing the rest of your diet.

5

Add psyllium at meals

1 tsp C-Lium (psyllium) stirred into a glass of water at each meal adds 3–5 g soluble fiber per dose — zero potassium, safe for dialysis.

🍽️ **Sample Filipino Fiber Day — How 25–38 g Looks in Real Meals**

Meal	Food	Fiber	Running total	CKD Safe?
Breakfast	½ cup rolled oats cooked with water (lugaw-style, no condensed milk) + 1 boiled egg + black barako coffee	4 g	4 g	✓ All CKD
Mid-morning	1 medium guava (eaten with skin) + water	5 g	9 g	⚠️ CKD4–5: ½ only
Lunch	½ cup monggo guisado + ½ cup brown rice + 1 cup kangkong ginisa (canola oil, no bagoong)	14 g	23 g	⚠️ CKD4–5: limit monggo, use white rice + psyllium instead
Afternoon	1 tbsp chia seeds stirred into water or calamansi juice (unsweetened)	5 g	28 g ✓W	✓ All CKD (small dose)
Dinner	Sautéed okra + sitaw with grilled galunggong + ½ cup corn (nilangang mais)	8 g	36 g ✓M	✓ All CKD

✓ W = Women's target met (25 g) ✓ M = Men's target met (38 g) ⚠️ CKD 4–5 / Dialysis: swap monggo for okra + psyllium; swap guava for pechay or saluyot; use white rice + 1 tsp psyllium in water instead of brown rice.

Fiber Supplements — When Food Alone Is Not Enough

Supplement	Fiber / dose	Fiber type	CKD / Dialysis	How to use · Key notes
Psyllium husk (C-Lium Fiber)	3–5 g / 1 tsp	Soluble + insoluble	✓ Safe ALL stages	Best all-round supplement. Stir 1 tsp in 250 mL water at meals. Evidence base: lowers LDL, treats constipation, helps CKD uremic toxins. Must drink adequate water.
Chia seeds	10 g / 2 tbsp	Soluble + insoluble	⚠️ ≤1 tbsp in CKD4–5	Stir into lugaw, water, or oatmeal. Omega-3 bonus. Soak for 15 min first — forms gel. Some phosphorus — limit dose in dialysis.
Oat bran	6–8 g / ½ cup	Soluble (beta-glucan)	✓ Safe all CKD	Highest beta-glucan per gram. Cook as porridge or mix into oatmeal. 3 g beta-glucan/day recognized for LDL reduction. Low K and P.
Flaxseed (ground)	5–6 g / 2 tbsp	Soluble + insoluble	⚠️ Limit in CKD 4–5	Use ground — whole seeds pass undigested. Omega-3 (ALA) bonus. Store in fridge to prevent rancidity. Moderate phosphorus.
Shirataki (konjac) rice	~1 g / cup	Glucomannan (soluble)	✓ Ideal for dialysis	Near-zero K and P. Good rice substitute for dialysis patients. Rinse thoroughly. Very filling. Lowers post-meal glucose significantly.

Key Takeaways — What to Remember

Your 5 Most Important Foods

These 5 foods alone can get most Filipinos to their fiber target: **oats · guava · monggo · chia seeds · okra**. Add one per day and build from there.

The Biggest Insight

A big green salad = 2–3 g fiber. Half cup of monggo soup = 8 g fiber. **Fiber is about the right foods — not the volume of vegetables eaten**. Focus on beans, legumes, and whole grains.

Replace, Don't Add

The easiest change: replace ½ cup white rice with ½ cup monggo soup **3× per week**. This one swap adds 16–24 g fiber per week — enough to meaningfully change your health outcomes.

⚠️ CKD and Dialysis Patients — Safe Fiber First

- **Best options (low K, low P):** psyllium husk (C-Lium), oats, okra, saluyot, kangkong, pechay, white rice + psyllium, shirataki rice.
- **Limit (check with dietitian):** monggo, avocado, guava, kamote, saba banana — all moderately high in potassium.
- **Avoid in CKD 4–5:** black beans (large portions), prunes (more than 2–3 pieces), full avocado.
- Leach all vegetables: boil in large water 15 min, drain, cook normally — reduces K 30–50%.

Constipation Myths Debunked

- **Melon milk:** melon is 90% water — NOT a fiber remedy. Will not relieve constipation.
- **Prune juice:** only partly works. Most fiber removed during juicing. Do not count toward daily fiber target.
- **What actually works:** whole prunes (5–6 pieces) or psyllium husk (1 tsp in water) — both supported by clinical trials. Always with 8+ glasses water daily.