

# 25 Foods That Fight Fat

Feast on fare that will help you slim down this summer.

**Y**ou still haven't made good on your intentions to pare down pounds by summer? It's not too late. Start by eating foods that can actually help you melt the fat away. Our best picks are rich in fiber, water and nutrients, which will keep you satisfied and make dieting as easy as a piece of (angel food) cake.

Get feisty with fruit.

Combat fat and satisfy hunger by keeping a variety of fresh fruits at hand. Try creative mixes to boost your enjoyment.



## 1. High-fiber cereal

Cereals with oat bran offer a whopping dose of fiber, which takes a long time to digest and keeps you full, helping to stave off the munchies. Fiber can also act like a sponge in the digestive tract and prevent other calories from being absorbed. A study by David Baer, Ph.D., at the United States Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center in Maryland, showed that women who replaced processed starches with complex carbohydrates—doubling their fiber intake from 12 to 24 grams a day—cut their calorie absorption by 90 calories daily. (That equals 10 pounds in one year!)

## 2. Three-bean salad

"Beans are an excellent source of protein and fiber," says Lawrence Cheskin, M.D., a physician at the Johns Hopkins Weight Management Center and a FAMILY



**Three-Bean Salad** combines fiber and protein, which will keep you feeling full for hours.

CIRCLE health and medical advisory board member. This combination keeps you satisfied and is better for you than fat-filled tuna salad or chicken salad.

## 3. Watermelon

This nutritious summer treat is 92 percent water, which lets you eat a lot for a few calories (a typical slice is only 45 calories), says Barbara Rolls, Ph.D., co-author of *The Volumetrics Weight-Control Plan* (HarperCollins).

## 4. Vegetable soup

Proof of the filling effects of water-rich foods is Dr. Rolls's study on soups. When served as a first course, broth- or vegetable-based soups (especially those full of antioxidant-rich veggies) curbed appetite, reducing the calories people consumed during the meal.

## 5. Oranges

Also full of fiber, water and nutrients, oranges are practically designed to

stop you from overeating. "The process of removing the peel forces you to take more time to eat," says Anne Dubner, R.D., an American Dietetic Association spokesperson in Houston. This stops you from eating mindlessly.

## 6. Low-fat string cheese

This good-for-you dairy product requires some effort to consume, making you less likely to overindulge. Peel away each string one by one to give yourself time to assess your satiety level, suggests Dubner. Cheese is also a great source of protein and calcium.

## 7. Popcorn

Light popcorn is an ideal fiber-rich snack. This airy food also lets you eat a large volume without overconsuming (only 30 calories per cup), says Dr. Rolls, at Pennsylvania State University.

Rachel Rabkin is the associate health and nutrition editor at FAMILY CIRCLE.

# Shed pounds by filling up on foods rich in fiber and water.

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## 8. Fruit smoothies

Dr. Rolls also found that when fruit smoothies are whipped an additional few minutes to enhance their puffed texture (increasing volume), people are more satisfied than they are with regular smoothies. Fruit smoothies are also packed with antioxidant-rich fruit and calcium-rich low-fat yogurt.

## 9. Potatoes with sour cream

When eaten with the skin, a spud is high in fiber and nutrients and low in calories. But be sure to add low-fat sour cream, not butter, because you'll get a lot less unwanted fat and calories per dollop (two tablespoons of low-fat sour cream is equal to one teaspoon of butter), advises Dubner.

## 10. Grilled fish

Fish is the most satiating source of protein, says Dr. Rolls, possibly because fish has a high water content. Eating fish may also keep fat off your hips because the body does not easily convert protein into body fat.

## 11. Corn on the cob

A delicious summer barbecue pick, corn on the cob is hard to eat quickly, so you're not likely to eat too much. Plus, its fiber keeps you feeling full. Spray on fat-free butter for extra flavor.

## 12. Berry dessert

Raspberries, blackberries and blueberries are all low-cal, high-fiber, nutrient dense and naturally sweet, says Dr. Cheskin. Add fat-free whipped topping and they taste like a sinful dessert.

## 13. Hard-boiled egg

This convenient, nutrient-rich protein source is about 75 percent water, according to Dr. Rolls. So even though it's low-calorie, it will give you a lasting feeling of satiety.

## 14. Frozen fruit-juice bars

This is a cool treat for a sizzling summer day. Made with real fruit juice, these bars are filled with antioxidants, fiber and wa-



**Frozen fruit-juice bars are nutritious, low-calorie treats.**

ter, says Dubner, which will refresh you and fill you up for only 60 calories.

## 15. Spicy stir-fries

A spiced-up stir-fried or steamed dish is a great way to fill up nutritiously. Studies show that adding spices to meals boosts satiety, notes Dubner. Use chopsticks to slow you down between bites and help you pace your meal.

## 16. Coffee

Caffeine actually jolts your body into speeding up your metabolism, according to recent studies published in the *International Journal of Sport Nutrition and Exercise Metabolism*. Study participants' calorie-burning rates were higher for an hour after drinking a cup of coffee. But don't overdo your coffee quota. Stick to one to two cups a day. Add some skim milk to your java for a non-fat calcium boost.

## 17. Prepackaged salad

You know that salads offer a lot of food for few calories, but you may not have time to gather the ingredients. "Pick up prepackaged salads at the grocery store," suggests Dr. Rolls. "There are lots of varieties with interesting options such as arugula, spinach and radicchio." Forgo the fat-filled creamy dressings and opt for balsamic vinegar and a dash of olive oil or a fat-free dressing.

## 18. Pasta salad with veggies

Have your pasta and lose weight too. Pasta is more than 50 percent water. And pasta salad bulked up with veggies, which also have a high water content, can provide a portion double the size for the same calories as pasta without the veggies, says Dr. Rolls.

## 19. Star fruit

Be creative with your fruit choices. Try something exotic like star fruit or kiwi. The variety will also add to the amount of different nutrients you consume.

## 20. Edamame

An exotic vegetable to consider: edamame (available at supermarkets and health food stores). Pop the

boiled or steamed soybeans out of their green pods directly into your mouth (a great snack food), or add them to soups, salads, pastas or stir-fries. They are an excellent source of protein, calcium, folate, vitamins A and B, and isoflavones, which are plant estrogens that have been shown to help alleviate hot flashes in menopausal women.

## 21. Shrimp cocktail

Don't reserve this elegant appetizer for dinner parties only. Shrimp cocktail offers high-quality, low-calorie protein with a nutrient-rich, low-calorie, tangy tomato sauce.

## 22. Grapes

This fruit provides a high volume of food for few calories, as opposed to its dried cousins, raisins (and other dried fruits), which are high in calories (mostly from sugar) and low in volume. Grapes contain fiber, are easy to transport to work or the beach, and taste like candy when frozen. Cherries are another nutritious snack, and their pits will slow you down so that you don't devour a handful in one gulp.

## 23. Bite-size pretzels

Have 20 pretzels instead of two by choosing the thin variety as opposed to the larger Bavarian pretzels, advises Dubner. A "serving" of the latter consists of two pretzels, while a "serving" of the smaller kind consists of 20. Though the calories are equal, you'll feel like you're eating more when munching on the smaller bites.

## 24. Grapefruit

Contrary to popular myth, this citrus fruit does not burn calories, but it is a low-calorie, nutritious, fiber-rich food. Plus, the sectioning involved in preparing each half inhibits you from eating too fast and overconsuming. Its tangy flavor also boosts satisfaction.

## 25. Gazpacho

Made with fresh or canned tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers, chilled gazpacho is a fat-fighter: It's nutritious, low-calorie, rich in fiber and water, and tasty—perfect for satisfying your hunger on a hot day.

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