



your

... It's Worth the Trip!



THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Chicken Kabobs and Barley Pilaf

Assuring the consumption of adequate fiber is an important behavior to promote optimal health. Fiber reduces the risk for some cancers and also helps to keep blood sugar and the bad cholesterol in your blood in balance to reduce the risk of heart disease. Eating foods that are good sources of fiber also assist with your weight management goals because these types of food usually have less calories and are more filling and take longer to digest than low-fiber foods; so, you're likely to eat less and stay satisfied longer. Some studies even show that the consumption of adequate fiber may prevent approximately 90 calories from fat being absorbed, which may assist with energy balance. The Institute of Medicine has established levels for the recommended amount of daily fiber for adult men and women, which are displayed in the table:

Fiber: Daily recommendations for adults

	Age: 50 or younger	Age: 51 or older
Men	38 grams	30 grams
Women	25 grams	21 grams

The two types of fiber are insoluble and soluble fiber. It is important to include both types of fiber in your diet. Insoluble fiber promotes regular bowel movements, prevents constipation, removes toxic waste, and helps to prevent colon cancer. Soluble fiber binds with fats and helps to lower the bad cholesterol in blood (Low Density Lipoproteins-LDLs), regulates blood sugar to help lower the risk of heart disease, and assists with the management of diabetes.

Because each type of fiber plays an important role in your overall health, it is important to choose foods that will supply your body with what it needs. However, when making food choice decisions, it is not necessary to be overly focused about the amount and which type of fiber you are consuming. The key is to focus on building a healthy eating pattern. By aiming to make most of your choices whole grain, eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, while consuming at least 7 servings per day, and limiting consumption of processed, empty calorie foods, you will likely meet your fiber needs! A good start is to be sure to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables during meal time.

Food Sources of Insoluble Fiber: Vegetables, such as green beans and dark green leafy vegetables; fruit skins and root vegetable skins; whole-wheat products; wheat and corn bran; seeds and nuts.

Food Sources of Soluble Fiber: Oat/oat bran; dried beans and peas; nuts; barley; flax seed; oranges and apples; carrots.

This meal features a unique way to serve fiber and antioxidant-rich barley and promotes the consumption of a variety of vegetables. This meal also proves that barley shouldn't only be used in soup!



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Directions: Preheat oven to 350°f

- 1) Begin by cutting 12-15 oz. of boneless, skinless chicken (breast or thighs) into 2 inch cubes and then add the cubed chicken to a large bowl. Mix in 2 Tbsp. olive oil, 2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar, 1/4th tsp. garlic salt and a couple of dashes of black pepper. Set aside to marinate.
- 2) On a sanitized surface and with clean hands, wash and prepare the vegetables and begin soaking the wooden skewers.
- 3) Remove the core and seeds from one green pepper and one red pepper, and then cut into chunks. Cut 1 yellow squash and 1 zucchini into 1/2 inch slices. Dice 1 medium onion and set aside for use in the pilaf.
- 4) Place the cut peppers and zucchini in a bowl, add 8 cherry tomatoes and then lightly season with a little salt and 1 Tbsp. olive oil. Toss gently.
- 5) Build 8 kabobs by placing the vegetables and chicken on the skewers, paying attention that the vegetables and chicken are equally distributed across the 8 skewers. Discard the chicken marinade.
- 6) Place the skewers on a foil lined baking pan and place the pan

Serves: 4

in the oven. Bake until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender (about 20 minutes—turn 1/2 way through).

- 7) While the kabobs are baking, melt 1 Tbsp. butter in a medium sauce pan over medium heat; add the onion, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté the onion for about 5 minutes, or until they begin to soften.
- 8) Add 3/4 cup quick barley to the onions, cook and stir constantly for about 2 minutes and then add 2 cups of low sodium chicken or vegetable broth and 1 bay leaf. Reduce the heat to low, cover and cook until the barley is almost tender (about 20-25 minutes). Salt and pepper to taste; top with a little freshly grated parmesan cheese and fresh parsley, if desired.
- 9) Serve each plate with 1/4th of the pilaf, 2 kabobs, and a side dish of your favorite fruit.

Notes:

The marinade works well for any type of meat. Consider using minced garlic, adding a little more, if you are a garlic lover.

Consider adding a little curry to the pilaf.

DISCLAIMER: YOU MAY USE ANY LIKE PRODUCTS OF ANY BRAND IN MAKING THIS HEALTHY CHOICE MEAL. THE PICTURES HERE ARE NOT AN ENDORSEMENT OF THESE PRODUCTS.

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