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Fiber gets a tasty update

BY VALERIE NAHMAD
vnaahmad@MiamiHerald.com

Fiber, figuratively, is not a four-letter word. Despite its bad (i.e. gaseous) rep, fiber is a bit of a wonder food. It lowers cholesterol, increases satiety, reduces the risk of certain cancers and helps regulate our weight. All this, and most of us still aren't getting anywhere near the recommended 20 to 35 grams a day. Good news: Fiber isn't all beans and dry cereal anymore. Take a bite out of these tasty new fiber-rich products.



Fiber Gourmet Pasta, \$10 for three bags

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Fill up on **Fiber Gourmet Pasta**, \$10 for three bags at

Fibergourmet.com or Apple A Day Natural Food Market, 1534 Alton Rd., Miami Beach, 305-538-4569. The Miami Beach-based company replaces half the flour in its pasta with resistant starch, an insoluble fiber naturally occurring in bananas, potatoes and other foods. A two-ounce serving has 130 calories, one gram of fat and an astounding 18 grams of fiber.

Prunes get a 21st century makeover courtesy of **Sunsweet Ones**, \$2.99 at grocery stores. Packaged in a sleek tube, the single-serving treats are traditional prunes dressed up in colorful wrappers. The big surprise here is that prunes are surprisingly tasty -- sweet, chewy and much, much better than they look (even in the fancy packaging). Plus, one serving of four prunes has 100 calories, zero grams of fat and three grams of fiber.

Billed as "fiberlicious," **Fiber One Chewy Bars**, \$2.89 at grocery stores, bring fiber to the snack bar category. Each 1.4-ounce bar contains 140-150 calories, 4-4.5 grams of fat and 9 grams of fiber. Chewy is definitely the right word. The bar stuck to my fingers and teeth as much as my ribs. But it was heavy on chocolate chips and definitely among the best tasting fiber I've ever had.

Kick your sandwich up a notch with **Western Bagel's Alternative Pita**, \$3.50 for a package of six at WesternBagel.com and select Publix locations. The soft pita pockets each pack in eight grams of fiber, 110 calories and .5 grams of fat. Taste is remarkably similar to the average pita - toast or stuff it and you'll never know the difference.