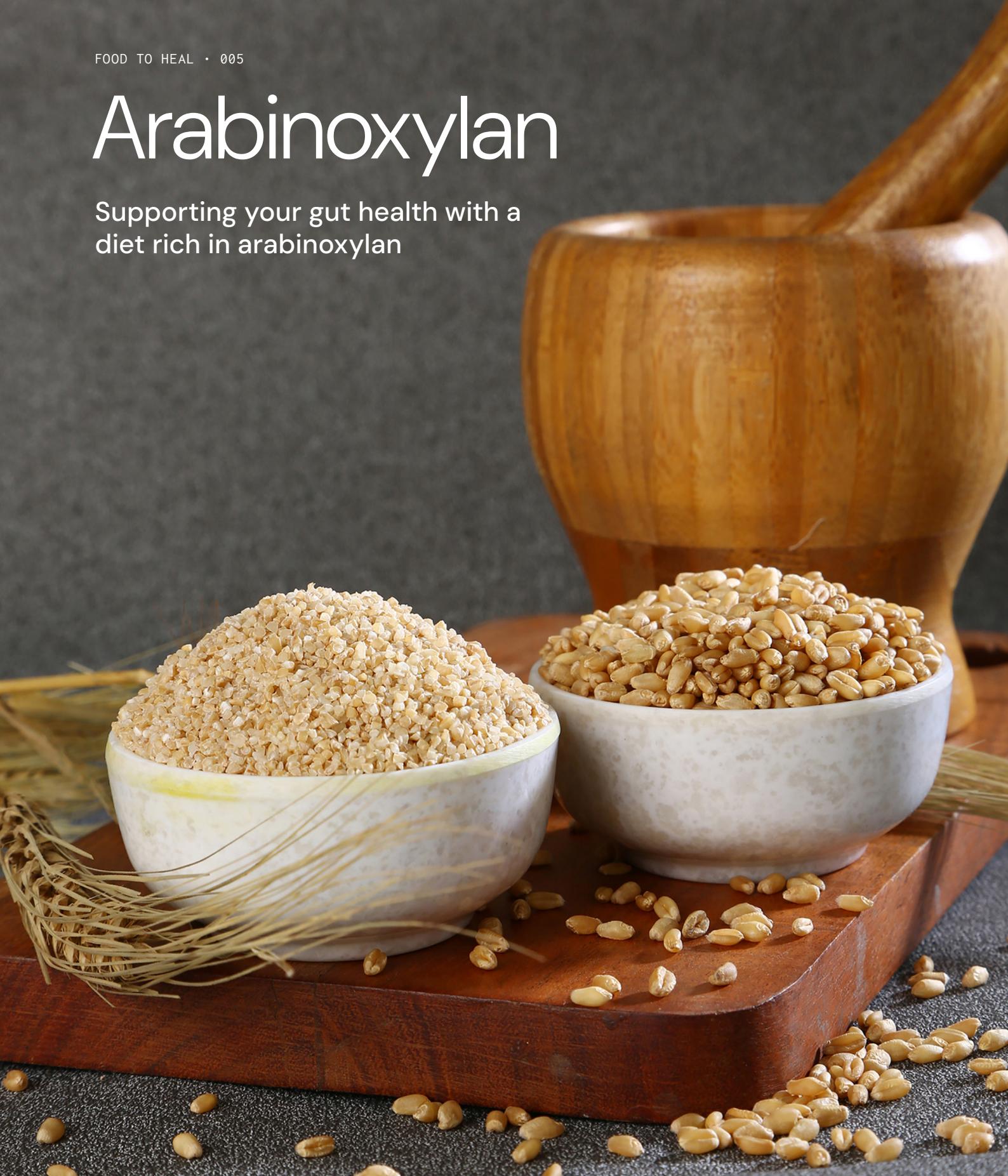




FOOD TO HEAL • 005

# Arabinoxylan

Supporting your gut health with a diet rich in arabinoxylan



# Increasing Dietary Intake of Arabinoxylan

Supporting your gut with gentle, everyday food choices

Whole grains do more than fill you up – they carry special fibres like arabinoxylan that your gut bacteria love. Instead of being digested straight away, arabinoxylan travels down to your large intestine, where beneficial microbes can use it. Adding a little more of these foods each day is a simple, gut-friendly step you can take.

What is arabinoxylan?

Arabinoxylan is a type of dietary fibre found mainly in the outer layers of whole grains such as wheat, rye, barley, oats, corn, rice and sorghum. Your body doesn't break it down in the small intestine, so it makes its way to the large intestine – right where most of your beneficial bacteria live.

Why it matters

Because arabinoxylan isn't broken down by your digestive enzymes, it passes through your system and reaches the colon largely intact. There, it becomes food for the beneficial bacteria in your gut.

When these bacteria feed on arabinoxylan, they produce substances called short-chain fatty acids, powerful compounds that support gut health and provide benefits for your overall wellbeing.

## Foods high in arabinoxylans:

(Aim for 3–6 serves per day across the categories below)\*

	Rye	Wheat	Other grains
Very Best		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pumpernickel bread, 1 slice</li><li>Wholegrain rye, <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup uncooked</li><li>Bran-based breakfast cereal, <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li><li>Wheat bran, 1 tbsp</li><li>Bulgur wheat, <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup uncooked</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Popcorn, <math>\frac{2}{3}</math> cup (GF)</li></ul>
Best		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ryvita, 2 crispbreads</li><li>Rye Mountain Bread, 2 pieces</li><li>Rye bread (made with 100% rye flour), 1 slice</li><li>Multigrain cereal, <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</li><li>Mixed grain bread, 1 slice</li><li>Wholemeal bread, 1 slice</li><li>Wholemeal pasta, <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup uncooked</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pearled barley, <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup uncooked</li><li>Brown rice, <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup uncooked (GF)</li><li>Rolled oats, <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup uncooked</li></ul>
High		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Rye bread (made with rye and wheat flour), 1 slice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sorghum products e.g Gluten Free Weet-bix, pasta (GF)</li><li>Corn Thins, 3 slices (GF)</li><li>Oat bran, 1 tbsp</li></ul>
Moderate		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Rye Cruskits, 2 crispbreads</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Couscous, 33g uncooked</li><li>Corn tortilla, 1 piece (GF)</li><li>Polenta 20g, uncooked (GF)</li></ul>

Note: Arabinoxylan content can vary with growing conditions and processing.

# How to add arabinoxylan-rich foods to your diet

- Switch your base: Choose wholegrain, or rye bread instead of white; try pumpernickel for a richer flavour.
- Build a bowl: Add brown rice, pearled barley, or wholegrain rye to soups, stews, salads or stir-fries.
- Boost breakfast: Pick a bran-based cereal or stir wheat bran into porridge or baking.
- Snack smart: Keep Ryvita or popcorn on hand for a quick, crunchy option.
- Gluten-free? Try brown rice, popcorn and sorghum-based products.
- Gentle reminder: Increases in fibre can cause extra gas or bloating at first — go slowly, drink water and build up over time.

## Increasing fibre intake:

1. Gradually increase fibre intake to allow the digestive system to adjust.
2. Stay well-hydrated as consuming more fibre without sufficient water may cause gastrointestinal blockage.
3. Expect some mild symptoms such as gas and bloating as a sign your gut microbiome is adjusting to the increased fibre intake. It is not necessarily a sign of intolerance.
4. If you get gut symptoms, slightly reduce your fibre intake for a few days before slowly increasing as tolerated.

## Recipe ideas

### Tabbouleh salad (serves 6 as side dish or 3 as main dish)

#### Ingredients:

- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup bulgur wheat
- 1 cup diced cucumber
- 1 cup diced tomato
- 4 cups of chopped parsley
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup chopped fresh mint
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup thinly sliced green onion
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 tbsp lemon juice, or to taste
- 1 minced garlic clove
- 1 tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp black pepper

#### Method:

1. Cook bulgur per packet (fine/medium/coarse vary). Drain and cool.
2. Combine cucumber, tomato and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt; rest 10 minutes, then discard excess liquid.
3. In a large bowl, mix cooled bulgur, parsley, mint and onion.
4. Add cucumber and tomato.
5. Whisk lemon juice, garlic, olive oil, remaining salt and pepper; pour over and toss.



## Vegetable barley soup (serves 4)



### Ingredients:

- 6 cups salt-reduced vegetable stock
- 1 diced brown onion
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 1 cup pearled barley or brown rice (GF)
- 1 cup of green beans, chopped into halves
- 350g sweet potato, chopped into 1cm cubes
- 4 medium carrots, chopped into 1cm cubes

### Method:

1. Rinse barley in a colander and leave to drain.
2. Add onion, green beans, sweet potato, carrots and celery to a pot and sauté for 5 minutes, stirring regularly.
3. Add the mixed herbs, bay leaf, garlic, salt and pepper to the pot. Stir for 1 minute.

- 2 celery stems, chopped into 1cm cubes
- 400g can diced tomatoes
- 1 dried bay leaf
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp mixed herbs
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 cup chopped fresh parsley

4. Add the rinsed pearled barley, diced tomatoes and vegetable stock. Stir to combine, then bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes or until barley is cooked (chewy but not hard in the middle).
5. Stir in the parsley leaves.
6. Ladle into bowls and serve with your favourite wholemeal bread.

## Stovetop savoury popcorn (serves 4)

### Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp avocado oil
- ½ cup popcorn kernels

### Method:

1. Place a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat and add the avocado oil.
2. Place two kernels of popcorn kernels into the pot. Cover the pot and wait for the kernels to pop (do not be tempted to open the lid beforehand).
3. Once the kernels have popped, remove the pot from the heat, turn off the stove and add the remaining kernels. Stir to combine.
4. Cover the pot and leave off the heat for another 30 seconds, then put it back on the

### Seasoning:

- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp cumin
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp salt, or to taste



5. stovetop and turn on the heat.
6. When the kernels start popping, tip the lid slightly to allow steam to escape.
7. Continue cooking until the pops have slowed to around one pop every few seconds.
8. Turn off the stove, remove the pot and empty the popcorn into a serving bowl.
9. Sprinkle popcorn with remaining ingredients.

Including foods high in arabinoxylan gives your daily diet a fibre boost and helps feed your gut bacteria. Pick one easy swap — a slice of rye, a handful of popcorn, or barley in soup — and build from there. Start small, enjoy the variety, and let your microbiome do the rest. Little changes add up over time.