



Taking a Fiber Supplement

There are many supplements and all can be purchased without a prescription. Typically, they are not covered by your insurance plan but can be purchased through an HAS/FSA account if you have one. I feel the best supplement is *Konsyl*[®]. I strongly recommend this brand over other psyllium-based supplements (like Metamucil) as the latter have less fiber per dose and many are artificially flavored and have other additives. I recommend the unflavored, sugar-free, natural version of *Konsyl*[®]. It can be purchased at a pharmacy and is much less expensive when ordered online. Please buy your first container at a local pharmacy and then order online for refills.





Psyllium can cause you to feel a bit 'gassy'. The benefits far outweigh the downsides, so please try the *Konsyl*® first before switching to an alternative. 'Fiber pills' and 'gummies' contain very little fiber and are usually ineffective and a waste of money.

Fiber works by increasing the water content of hard bowel movements, making them softer. Fiber helps 'glue' together hard and fragmented bowel movements. Fiber also absorbs excess water in loose or diarrheal BMs, and adds bulk. Even if you typically eat 'lots of fiber', a supplement can help since it's difficult to eat enough of the proper mix of soluble and insoluble fiber. Yes, even if you're a vegetarian.

Fiber supplements are best consumed just before dinner: this typically promotes a soft and productive bowel movement each morning. The optimal dose of *Konsyl*® is different for each person. Start with 2 teaspoons at once. You may require more if you continue to have hard bowel movements.

How to take *Konsyl*®:

1. Place the dose (usually 2 teaspoons) into the provided shaker cup. Fill to the line with briskly flowing tap water. Quickly apply the cup top, shake vigorously, and down it (chug). Then quickly fill the cup again, cover, shake and down again. Trying to slowly consume the *Konsyl*® will lead to a thick, gelatinous, unpalatable drink -- yuk! *Konsyl*® does not have an unpleasant taste, but absorbs water rapidly and becomes a gel (that's why it works so well). I do not recommend mixing with fruit juice since rapid consumption is the key to success so you'll waste the taste and the calories of the juice. *Konsyl*® has no taste. It's the consistency that you have to get past, and rapid consumption (before it's had the chance to absorb water and become a gel) is the key to successful chugging.
2. Rinse the shaker cup well as the dried *Konsyl*® gel will tend to cake on the sides.

Alternative Fiber Supplements (None of these are quite as effective as *Konsyl*®):

- Metamucil or any generic brand of psyllium
- Citrucel
- Benefiber

If you are having some stool leakage or have loose stool the following can be effective as an alternative:

- Fibercon Tablets – best taken just before each meal
- Metamucil Wafers – as a snack. Tastes like graham crackers.

Avoid fiber capsules or gummies, as these hardly contain any useful fiber at all. For full treatment for a fissure you will need to consume 48 of these capsules a day.



THE STERNBERG CLINIC
surgeons who listen

Jeffrey A. Sternberg, MD, FACS, FASCRS
77 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 302
San Francisco, CA 94102
415.821.8000

*"The **Konsyl**[®] works great! It keeps me more regular than I've ever been."*

.....Anonymous grateful patient.