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More Evidence Supports Higher Fiber Intake to Lower DM Risk

Effect might be largely due to weight loss linked to eating more grains and vegetables, experts say

WEDNESDAY, May 27, 2015 (HealthDay News) -- More evidence that a high fiber diet helps protect against type 2 diabetes has been presented in research published online May 26 in *Diabetologia*.

Dagfinn Aune, a Ph.D. student affiliated with Imperial College London, and colleagues looked at data on 29,238 Europeans tracked for an average of 11 years. Those with the highest amount of fiber in their diet (more than 26 grams a day) were 18 percent less likely to develop type 2 diabetes than those with the lowest fiber intake (less than 19 grams a day), even after Aune's team accounted for other dietary and lifestyle factors. Obesity was key, however. The researchers said that when a person's body mass index was accounted for, the benefits of a high-fiber diet in warding off diabetes disappeared.



When the researchers focused on specific types of fiber, they found that people who consumed the highest amounts of cereal and vegetable fiber were 19 and 16 percent, respectively, less likely to develop type 2 diabetes than those who consumed the lowest amounts of these types of fiber. Cereals accounted for 38 percent of total fiber intake in the study, and were the main source of fiber in all countries except France, where vegetables were the main source of fiber. Consumption of fruit fiber was not associated with a lower risk of diabetes.

The researchers also analyzed the findings of 18 other studies from the United States, Europe, Australia, and Asia. That analysis also found a lowering of type 2 diabetes risk as daily intake of fiber increased. "Taken together, our results indicate that individuals with diets rich in fiber, in particular cereal fiber, may be at lower risk of type 2 diabetes," Aune, who is also affiliated with the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, said in a journal news release. He believes other mechanisms may be at work as well, "for instance improving control of blood sugar and decreasing insulin peaks after meals, and increasing the body's sensitivity to insulin."

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