



## **Barley fights diabetes**

According to the American Diabetes Association, type 2 diabetes and pre-diabetes affect over 80 million Americans (*Source: National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2014*). Health and nutrition professionals remind us, however, that this disease can be controlled and even prevented. It's a matter of making some simple but important lifestyle choices including losing weight, increasing physical activity and adding plenty of whole grain, high fiber foods such as barley to the daily diet.

### **Barley is a smart choice**

Barley is an excellent food choice for those concerned about type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes because the grain contains essential vitamins and minerals and is an excellent source of dietary fiber, particularly beta-glucan soluble fiber. Research shows that barley beta-glucan soluble fiber promotes healthy blood sugar by slowing glucose absorption.

### **Barley research findings**

Findings from a clinical trial published in the December 2006 edition of Nutrition Research showed that mildly insulin-resistant men who ate muffins containing barley beta-glucan soluble fiber experienced significant reductions in glucose and insulin responses, compared to responses after eating muffins made with corn starch.

In a clinical study reported in the August 2006 edition of the Journal of the American College of Nutrition, data showed that subjects who ate cookies and crackers made with barley flour enriched with beta-glucan soluble fiber also experienced significant reductions in glucose and insulin responses compared to responses after eating the same products made with whole wheat flour.

A long-term study published in the August 2007 edition of the Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice journal reported a 30-percent decrease in HbA1c (average blood glucose level) in type 2 diabetics who consumed a healthy diet including pearl barley that supplied 18 grams of soluble fiber a day.

### **Barley beta-glucan through and through**

Regardless of the form of the grain, barley supplies a ready source of beta-glucan soluble fiber. Unlike many grains, which contain fiber only in the outer bran layer, barley contains fiber throughout the entire kernel. So whether it's whole grain or processed barley products, dietary fiber, including beta-glucan soluble fiber, is available in amounts that have a positive impact on improving blood glucose levels.

### **Enjoy barley for breakfast, lunch and dinner**

It's easy to include barley in a healthful and delicious diet. For example:

- Choose barley flakes for a hearty cooked breakfast cereal.
- Add pearl or whole grain barley kernels to your favorite soups, stews, casseroles and salads.
- Use pearled or whole grain barley kernels as a fiber-rich addition to favorite stir-frys or Chinese take-out entrees

For more ideas, visit [www.barleyfoods.org](http://www.barleyfoods.org) and click on the Recipes tab.