High Fiber Diet helps the Heart

Presented at the American College of Cardiology (ACC) Middle East Conference 2019 with the 10th Emirates Cardiac Society Congress, the study showed that patients who went on a high-fiber diet had significant improvements in their health, including their fasting glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol. How a high-fiber diet improves health.

- **A high-fiber diet:**
  - Decreases the risk for:
    - Heart disease
    - Diabetes
    - Cancer
  - Helps with:
    - Weight control
    - Gastrointestinal health

The team of researchers, from the Care Well Heart and Super Specialty Hospital in Amritsar, India, tracked the fiber intake of 200 diabetic adults for six months. The participants received regular nutrition counseling sessions and received diet "prescriptions" that outlined specific nutrition guidelines—including food groups and portion sizes—that they were expected to follow over the study period. They were given checkups at the beginning of the study and then follow-ups at the three-month and six-month mark.

The "high-fiber" group consumed 20 to 25% more than the recommended allowances of fiber (which is about 24 to 20 grams per day). The researchers tracked the participants' fiber intake diligently over the study period through telephone calls with the participants—which were scheduled three times a week—and having the patients send photos of their meals via WhatsApp.

After six months, the participants on the high-fiber diet showed attention-grabbing improvements in their health, including a 9% reduction in serum cholesterol, a 23% reduction in triglycerides, and a 15 and 28% reduction in systolic blood pressure and fasting glucose, respectively. The results clearly showed that a high-fiber diet has a protective effect against cardiovascular
disease and improved blood sugar, which play an important role in diabetes but are also major risk factors for heart disease.

How to get more fiber in your diet.

As the lead author on the study, Rohit Kapoor, M.D., said, this study provides some very helpful information. "Firstly, a high fiber diet is important in cases of diabetes and hypertension to prevent future cardiovascular disease," he said. It also showed that a high-fiber diet in combination with medical treatment can improve metabolic markers like blood lipid levels and waist-to-hip ratio, but even more importantly, it showed that "medical nutrition therapy and regular counseling sessions also hold great importance in treating and prevention of diabetes and hypertension." The personalized attention and support patients were given in this study went above and beyond and was likely a big part of their success. Plus, it provides good evidence of how motivated people can be to change their lifestyle if they are just given proper guidance and support.

Increasing your fiber intake is one of the simplest things you can do to improve your health. Luckily, it's also easy to do, as common (and tasty!) foods like chia seeds, oats, chickpeas, artichokes, and bananas are high in fiber. Start with this Red Berry Chia Pudding or make this Chickpea, Cucumber & Avocado Salad for lunch.
Best High Fiber Foods

- **Lentils**
  - 15.6g/Cup
  - 7.9g/100g

- **Kidney Beans**
  - 11.3g/Cup
  - 5.4g/100g

- **Pears**
  - 5.5g/Pear
  - 3.1g/100g

- **Strawberries**
  - 3g/Cup
  - 2g/100g

- **Avocados**
  - 10g/Cup
  - 6.7g/100g

- **Black Beans**
  - 15g/Cup
  - 8.9g/100g

- **Coconuts**
  - 7g/Cup
  - 9g/100g

- **Sweet Potatoes**
  - 3.3g/Medium size
  - 2.5g/100g

- **Artichoke**

- **Apples**