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Increasing dietary fiber intake to at least 25 grams per day from varied sources provides a significant protective effect against cardiovascular disease. Current research implies that fiber intakes of 30-35 grams per day may provide an even greater protective effect.

INCREASED FIBER INTAKE PROTECTS AGAINST CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE RISK FACTORS

Increased dietary fiber intake is associated with reduced levels of a number of cardiovascular disease risk factors. The results of a study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* add to a growing body of evidence linking higher dietary fiber intake with a lower risk of heart disease.

Nearly 6,000 men and women were selected from participants in an ongoing trial designed to evaluate the effect of antioxidants on cancer and heart disease incidence over an eight year period.

The highest total and insoluble dietary fiber intakes were associated with reductions in the risks of overweight and elevated waist-to-hip ratio, blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides, and homocysteine. Fiber from cereals was associated with a lower body mass index, blood pressure, and homocysteine concentration; fiber from vegetables with a lower blood pressure and homocysteine concentration; and fiber from fruit with a lower waist-to-hip ratio and blood pressure. Fiber from dried fruit or nuts and seeds was associated with a lower body mass index, waist-to-hip ratio, and glucose concentrations.

The findings of this study illustrate the significance of increasing fiber intake from various dietary sources. The results also indicate that 25 grams total dietary fiber per day is the minimum intake required to attain a significant protective effect against cardiovascular disease, and that total dietary fiber intakes of 30-35 grams/day will likely provide an even greater protective effect.

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