

Ask Leyla: Will extra fiber in my diet help to control blood sugar?



Q: Most of the time I eat very healthily and get most of my fiber from fresh fruits and vegetables, plus flaxseed, chia seeds and nuts. However, I would like to add additional fiber to my diet. Are wheat dextrin or corn dextrin okay to consume? Will adding more fiber to my diet help control my blood sugar?

A: The general recommendation for fiber intake in adults ranges from 20 to 35 grams a day, including both soluble and insoluble fiber, including lignins, pectin, cellulose, gums and mucilages. Fiber is thought to have many health benefits including prevention of constipation, hemorrhoids, diverticulosis and promoting satiety at meals to help promote a healthy weight.



Wheat and corn dextrin are soluble fibers that help absorb water and become gelatinous, helping to remove excess cholesterol and waste from the body. While dextrins can also aid in stabilizing blood sugar by slowing down the rate of

digestion and absorption, the scientific literature reveals it doesn't do it nearly as well as protein and fat intake at meals. Still, fiber is a good guy and a healthy addition to anyone's diet.

Please note that wheat and corn are two of the top eight food allergens, so those with allergy or intolerance shouldn't use wheat or corn dextrins.

You're already eating the best sources of fiber in my book: vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds. This article in *Today's Dietitian* can help guide you in planning your meals so you can ensure you're getting adequate amounts of fiber each day.