# Going Gluten-Free May Increase the Risk for Type 2 Diabetes

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Gluten-free diets may be popular these days, but for people hoping to avoid type 2 diabetes, shunning grains such as wheat, rye and barley might not be the smartest option.

According to new findings presented at a meeting of the American Heart Association's Epidemiology and Prevention/Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health 2017 Scientific Sessions, people in a study who ate more gluten were significantly less likely to develop the metabolic condition than those who cut back on the ingredient, Live Science reports.

Indeed, some folks shouldn't consume gluten, a type of protein that acts as a glue to hold bread products together. This includes those suffer from abdominal pain, bloating and fatigue after eating it, a condition commonly defined as gluten intolerance. In addition, people with celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder that attacks the lining of the small intestine when gluten is eaten, should also avoid foods containing this protein. But doctors aren't so sure about recent trends that advise people without these conditions to stop consuming gluten.

For this latest study, researchers from Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health reviewed diet surveys from nearly 200,000 subjects conducted every two to four years during a 30-year period. The scientists estimated participants' gluten intake based on this info and then checked to see which participants developed type 2 diabetes (which occurs when the body can't properly use insulin, a hormone that helps the body regulate blood sugar levels efficiently).

By the end of the study, researchers found that nearly 16,000 people developed the metabolic disorder. What's more, findings showed that those who reported eating the most gluten during the study period registered a 13 percent lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes, compared with those who ate the least gluten.

According to scientists, the findings suggested that there may be a link between people's gluten consumption and their risk for diabetes. This conclusion is supported by previous research suggesting that those who eat more gluten also consume more fiber, which might help to lower a person's diabetes risk.

Still, much more research is needed before doctors start to recommend high-gluten diets for those hoping to avoid type 2 diabetes.

Click here to learn more about how going gluten-free unnecessarily could damage your health.

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