

Fibre for a healthier life with diabetes

Does dietary fibre improve the health of people with type 2 diabetes? That is the question PhD candidate Iris van Damme (Human Nutrition & Health) is studying.

The 'Better food for diabetes' study, a collaboration between WUR, the Nutrition & Healthcare Alliance and Ede and Arnhem hospitals, started last December. 'We know from other studies that diabetics who eat a lot of fibre are healthier,' says Van Damme. 'We want to see what those results mean for the Dutch context.'

Dietician

In this study, Van Damme splits the participants into two groups. The control group gets the usual care while the intervention group gets personalized dietary advice from a dietician as well. 'The dietician helps them increase the amount of dietary fibre in their diet.' They can do that for example by eating more fruit, vegetables, nuts or pulses or by replacing white bread with wholemeal bread. The researchers

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use the recommended dietary fibre intake from the Good Nutrition Guidelines.

Van Damme and her colleagues will also measure the physical and mental health of the participants at three points in the year. 'The key question is whether people have an increased or reduced risk of cardiovascular diseases,' says the nutritional expert. 'So we measure the blood pressure, blood sugar levels and cholesterol.' The researchers will also use questionnaires to assess whether people feel better when eating more dietary fibre. ^{ss}

Participants wanted

Van Damme still needs another 140 or so participants: people with type 2 diabetes who don't use insulin. For more information, see www.voedjebeter.nl.