Higher intake of whole grains may lower risk for liver cancer

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(HealthDay)—Higher intake of whole grains may be associated with a

lower risk for hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) among U.S. adults, according to a study published online Feb. 21 in *JAMA Oncology*.

Wanshui Yang, Ph.D., from Anhui Medical University in Hefei, China, and colleagues assessed the associations between whole grain and dietary fiber (cereal, fruit, and vegetable) intake and the risk for HCC among 125,455 participants from two cohorts: the Nurses' Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study.

The researchers identified 141 patients with HCC during an average follow-up of 24.2 years. A significant association was seen between increased whole grain intake and lower risk for HCC (highest versus lowest tertile of intake: hazard ratio [HR], 0.63; 95 percent confidence interval [CI], 0.41 to 0.96; P = 0.04 for trend). A similar but nonsignificant association was seen for HCC and total bran (HR, 0.7; 95 percent CI, 0.46 to 1.07; P = 0.11 for trend) but not for the germ subcomponent of whole grain. There was also a nonsignificantly reduced risk for HCC with increased intake of cereal fiber (HR, 0.68; 95 percent CI, 0.45 to 1.03; P = 0.07 for trend), but the association was not seen for fruit or vegetable fiber.

"Future studies that carefully consider hepatitis B and C virus infections are needed to replicate our findings, to examine these associations in other racial/ethnic or high-risk populations, and to elucidate the underlying mechanisms," the authors write.

More information: Abstract/Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)