

Experiment shows timely info may prompt purchase of fiber-rich foods

January 11 2021, by Scott Schrage

Though dietary fiber assists digestion, promotes weight loss, lowers "bad" cholesterol and helps control blood sugar, just 5% of Americans consume recommended amounts of it.

Research suggests that the deficiency stems in part from an ignorance of fiber's health benefits and an out-of-sight, out-of-mind mentality when [grocery shopping](#).

Point-of-decision prompts—messages that encourage shoppers to consider health when making a purchase—have shown promise for convincing people to buy nutritious foods.

Nebraska's Christopher Gustafson, Devin Rose and recent master's graduate Kristina Arslain conducted a simulated online shopping experiment in which 753 participants randomly received either no prompt or information about the [health benefits](#) of fiber. The participants were also given nutritional data, including fiber content, for the 33 cereals, 33 breads and 33 crackers offered to them.

Those receiving the informational prompts "purchased" cereals and breads containing an average of 22% more fiber, along with crackers containing 26% more. The prompted purchases also boasted higher overall nutrition ratings.

Embedding more point-of-decision prompts in actual websites and [grocery stores](#) could encourage shoppers to purchase foods rich in fiber

and other neglected nutrients.

Future studies should continue investigating how the prompts influence decision-making, the researchers said.

More information: Kristina Arslain et al. Point-of-Decision Prompts Increase Dietary Fiber Content of Consumers' Food Choices in an Online Grocery Shopping Simulation, *Nutrients* (2020). [DOI: 10.3390/nu12113487](https://doi.org/10.3390/nu12113487)

Provided by University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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