

Increased consumption of whole grains could significantly reduce the economic impact of type 2 diabetes

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Increased consumption of whole grain foods could significantly reduce the incidence of type 2 diabetes and the costs associated with its

treatment in Finland, according to a recent study by the University of Eastern Finland and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. The findings were published in *Nutrients*.

"Our study shows that already one serving of full [grains](#) as part of the daily diet reduces the incidence of type 2 diabetes at the population level and, consequently, the direct diabetes-related costs, when compared to people who do not eat whole grain foods on a daily basis. Over the next ten years, society's potential to achieve [cost savings](#) would be from 300 million (-3.3%) to almost one billion (-12.2%) euros in current value, depending on the presumed proportion of whole grain foods in the daily diet. On the level of individuals, this means more healthier years," says Professor Janne Martikainen from the University of Eastern Finland.

Type 2 diabetes is one of the fastest-growing chronic diseases both in Finland and globally. Healthy nutrition that supports weight management is key to preventing type 2 diabetes. The association of daily consumption of whole grain foods with a lower risk of diabetes has been demonstrated in numerous studies.

"According to nutrition recommendations, at least 3–6 servings of whole grain foods should be eaten daily, depending on an individual's energy requirement. One third of Finns do not eat even one dose of whole grains on a daily basis, and two thirds have a too low fiber intake," Research Manager Jaana Lindström from the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare says.

The now published study utilized findings from, e.g., national follow-up studies, such as the FinHealth Study, to assess the health and [economic effects](#) of increased consumption of whole grain foods on the prevention of type 2 diabetes.

"By combining [population-level](#) data on the incidence of type 2 diabetes

and the costs of its treatment, as well as published evidence on the effects of how consumption of [whole grain foods](#) reduces the incidence of type 2 [diabetes](#), we were able to assess the potential health and economic benefits from both social and individual viewpoints," Martikainen says.

More information: Janne Martikainen et al, Type 2 Diabetes-Related Health Economic Impact Associated with Increased Whole Grains Consumption among Adults in Finland, *Nutrients* (2021). [DOI: 10.3390/nu13103583](https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13103583)

Provided by University of Eastern Finland

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