

## **Fiber Cuts Calories In More Ways Than One**

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**Research indicates that fiber in the diet has the additional benefit of decreasing the digestion of proteins and fats.**

**The more fiber in the participants' diets, the fewer the calories they ended up "absorbing."**

**It was said that a high-fiber diet may help people trying to lose weight because the roughage, which contributes no calories, fills people up before they can overeat. Now new research suggests that fiber also helps cut calories by blocking the digestion of some of the fat and protein consumed with it.**

The less fat and protein digested the less that gets absorbed into the bloodstream. Instead, more of those two calorie-containing nutrients gets passed in the stools and urine. Researchers at the U.S.D.A. Human Nutrition Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland, made the finding when they put people on diets with a set number of calories--but periodically changed their meal plans' fiber content.

What it comes down to in practical terms, say the researchers, is that if a man kept his calories constant but managed to choose foods that doubled his average fiber intake from 18 to 36 grams a day, he would end up with about 130 fewer calories daily. A woman who doubled her fiber consumption from the American woman's average of 12 grams to 24 grams would get 90 fewer calories a day--equivalent to nine or 10 pounds' worth of calories over a year's time. But lead researcher David Baer, PhD, says that even if a woman went from, say, 12 to 20 grams a day and a man went from 20 to 25 grams, "there probably would be some effect."