

California Raisins UK

Consumer Press Release



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RECENT RESEARCH POINTS TO INCREASED LEVELS OF FIBRE BEING A POTENTIAL GAME CHANGER

By Rick Miller, Clinical and Sports Dietitian, Harley Street, London

Whilst no one likes to talk about it, bowel cancer is a very real condition that according to Cancer Research affects nearly 42,000 people every year and according to the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) it is the third most common cancer worldwide.



Bowel cancer is often termed colorectal cancer due to it affecting the lower portion of the gut that extends from the caecum to the rectum called the colon. The role of the colon is to reabsorb any water and salts from undigested foods leaving just the waste products (our poo) that move towards the rectum.

But the colon is not just a glorified 'poop chute', the colon is the home to a vast colony of bacteria that we term the microbiota. There are, apparently, 10 times as many microbial cells for each human cell in our bodies! We know now through large studies observing the gut bacteria in people such as the American Gut Project and British Gut Project, that some of these bacteria are good and some not so. These bacteria appear to affect diverse systems in our body, from the immune system, to cardiovascular function, allergies, diabetes and even IBS.

Whilst we're not at the stage where we know exactly what a good microbiota looks like, we do have a much better understanding that a diverse microbiota with lots of different species of bacteria may help to prevent diseases such as bowel cancer.

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This amazing information from the lab appears to translate straight over to the statistics. The data suggests that in just over half of all bowel cancer cases the disease was entirely preventable by lifestyle changes.

So what do we need to do to combat the 'big c'?
Luckily the WCRF have crunched the data for us.

There appears to be strong evidence that:

Being physically active – the recommended amount of activity by the Chief Medical Officer is 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise (exercise that leaves you a bit hot and sweaty and raises your heart rate) per week.

Eating wholegrain foods – Foods such as wholegrain breakfast cereals, bread, pasta, rice, cous cous and pseudograins such as: quinoa, buckwheat are all great sources of wholegrains.

Consuming dairy products – Foods such as milk, yoghurt, kefir and cheese are all rich in calcium, which appears to protect the bowel. Taking a calcium supplement if you don't consume dairy may also help.

Consuming dietary fibre – found in fruits, including dried fruits such as California Raisins, vegetables, nuts, seeds and legumes such as beans, peas, peanuts and lentils. The UK recommended intake of fibre is 30g per day and a serving of California Raisins provides 1.6g of fibre towards this target.

All decrease the risk of colon cancer.

The final point about fibre I want to hammer home came to the forefront during January. A large scale study was published in **The Lancet that dietary fibre above 25-29g a day could have major implications for reducing the risk of many diseases, including bowel cancer.**

In fact one of the lead authors, Professor John Cummings was quoted as saying this about the study:

"The evidence is overwhelming and this is a game-changer that people need to start doing something about"

To combat bowel cancer it really sounds like it's time we got excited about changing our lifestyles and diet, **in particular we need to get excited about fibre.**

As a nation we are no where near this target but by making a few dietary changes, such as a serving or more of California Raisins we can make reaching that goal a little easier.

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