

Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with fiber intake and possibilities of its increase. The main aim of the thesis is to evaluate the actual intake of fiber in the population and to find out whether people actually know what fiber is and what should be its daily intake.

The theoretical part is focused on fiber itself. It describes its characteristics, distribution, properties and sources. The effect of fiber on human health and the consequences of insufficient or excessive fiber intake are discussed as well.

The practical part is focused on the real intake of fiber in the population. It is done in the form of a questionnaire survey, in which I try to find out what knowledge of fiber people have, but also how often they consume foods containing fiber. Most of the questionnaires were handed out to customers of one unnamed pharmacy and healthy nutrition center in Prague and other passers-by. Altogether, I managed to collect 84 questionnaires.

The questionnaire results show that vast majority of respondents have an idea of what fiber is and which foods contain it most; however, they do not know what the recommended daily intake is. Still, half of the respondents think their diet includes enough fiber. The fiber intake in men and women was not much different. The most significant difference was in the consumption of nuts and seeds - women consumed them more often than men. Another difference was, for example, consumption of fruit and vegetables. A large proportion of women responded that they consume it both at least once a day, while men consume fruit at most once a day and vegetables 3-5 times a week. These results are assessed and presented at the end of the diploma thesis.

Key words: Dietary fiber, fiber consumption, whole grain products, functional foods, constipation, prebiotics