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ROLE OF β-GLUCAN IN PREVENTION OF LIFE-STYLE RELATED DISEASES

Summary

One of the factors that help in the fight against obesity and other civilization diseases is a diet rich in fiber. One of the fraction of dietary fibre is β-glucan that can be naturally found in some grains and fungi. β-glucan decreases the levels of cholesterol and postprandial glucose in blood, which in turn are associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular diseases and diabetes type II, respectively. There is also evidence that β-glucan is capable of improving immunological resistance, as well as of an supporting anti-tumor therapy.

The consumption of food containing β-glucan (nowadays the most common groups of a such food are grain products and beverages), as a part of daily diet, can contribute to an improvement of consumer's health. To gain the best possible results in terms of maintenance of health and sensory properties of the food, further investigations are still needed. Specifically, this concerns investigations on the influence of the form of food and parameters of technological processes, as well as mechanisms underlying β-glucan's immunomodulatory and anti-cancer properties.

Key words: β-glucan, life-style related diseases, immunology, cancer