Type 2 diabetes affects millions of Canadians, and the number is expected to increase over time. Soy, and foods containing soy, can help to manage symptoms of type 2 diabetes. However, it is unknown if diabetics actually eat soy (what motivates them to eat it, what stops them from eating it) and if they understand the potential health benefits. This research was conducted to answer these questions.

Adults with type 2 diabetes, especially those who don’t regularly eat soy, need more information about how to prepare soy and the potential health benefits. The most commonly consumed soy foods were soy beverages, tofu and soy nuts, and those who consumed soy were more likely to be vegetarian, lactose intolerant and avoid drinking cow’s milk.

Health professionals can use this research to communicate the health benefits of eating soy and preparation techniques to adults with type 2 diabetes.

Industry can use this research to create effective marketing strategies to increase soy consumption in adults with type 2 diabetes.
**What did the researchers find?**

Alison Duncan and her team found that 19% of the 202 adults interviewed were ‘soy consumers’. The most commonly consumed soy foods were soy beverages, tofu and soy nuts. There were no differences between consumers and non-consumers in demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) or in strategies used to manage diabetes. However, soy consumers took medications less often. They were also more likely to be vegetarian, lactose intolerant and avoid cow’s milk. The most common reason for consuming soy was for general health and the most common barrier to consuming soy was not knowing how to prepare it. Compared to consumers, non-consumers were unsure if soy was healthy and did not know if soy would be helpful for specific health conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis). The majority of both soy consumers and non-consumers said they needed more information about soy.

**Keywords:**

Soy, type 2 diabetes, prevalence, consumption, diet, nutrition, behaviour

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**About the Researchers:**

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**Cite this work:**


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