Whole Grains at Every Meal

What are whole grains?

Whole grains contain all the essential parts and naturally occurring nutrients of the entire grain seed. If the grain has been processed (e.g. cracked, crushed, rolled, extruded, and/or cooked), the food product should deliver approximately the same rich balance of nutrients that are found in the original grain seed.

Health Benefits:

Eating whole grains lowers the risk of many chronic diseases. Benefits are most pronounced for those consuming at least 3 servings daily, although some studies have shown reduced risks from as little as one serving daily. Every whole grain in your diet helps!

- Reduces stroke risk by 30-36%
- Reduces type 2 diabetes risk by 21-30%
- Reduces heart disease risk by 25-28%
- Helps with weight management

How much should I consume?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that all adults eat at least half their grains as whole grains: at least 3-5 servings of whole grains. The average American eats less than one daily serving of whole grains, and over 40% of Americans NEVER eat whole grains at all. Start
incorporating whole grains into as many meals as possible. Every bit of whole grain you eat contributes to better health.

**Identifying Whole Grains**

The Whole Grains Council has created an official packaging symbol called the Whole Grain Stamp. This stamp helps consumers find products containing whole grains. This stamp only started appearing on store shelves in 2005 and is becoming more widespread. If a package does not have a stamp, check the package label. If you see a statement like “100% whole wheat,” it most-likely can be trusted. But be skeptical if you see the words “whole grain” or “crackers made with whole grain.” The product may contain only a miniscule amount of whole grain.

**Ways to Make Easy, but Healthy Substitutions**

- Substitute half the white flour with whole wheat flour
- Replace one third of the flour in a recipe with quick oats or old-fashioned oats
- Add half a cup of cooked bulgur, wild rice, or barley to bread stuffing
- Add half a cup of cooked wheat or rye berries, wild rice, brown rice, sorghum or barley to your favorite canned or home-made soup
- Use whole corn meal for corn cakes, corn breads and corn muffins
- Add three-quarters of a cup of uncooked oats for each pound of ground beef or turkey when you make meatballs, burgers or meatloaf
- Stir a handful of rolled oats in your yogurt, for quick crunch with no cooking necessary

**For more information on Whole Grains visit:** www.wholegrainscouncil.org

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