

WHOLE GRAINS

What is a whole grain?

Whole-grain foods have all three parts of the grain: the bran, the endosperm and the germ. Each part provides nutrients; however, eating the whole grain is healthier because all three parts can work together.

How can you tell if a food is whole grain?

Look at the package and label. Look for the words "whole grain." Check the ingredient list, too. Ingredients on the food label are listed in order of their weight per serving. If the food is high in a whole grain, it will be listed first. Be sure the word "whole" is in front of a grain. For example, "whole-wheat flour" is a whole grain, but "wheat flour" is not.



What ingredients are not whole grains?

Multigrain, 100 percent wheat, stone ground and pumpnickel are not necessarily whole grains. Many of these products have grains and flour, but they do not have whole grains or whole-grain flour. Looking at the Nutrition Facts label also provides clues about whole grains. Look at the amount of fiber per serving. Most whole-grain products will have two or three grams of fiber, refined grain products will have one gram.

How to choose a whole-wheat bread

1. Find the ingredient list on the bread wrapper.
2. Choose bread that lists whole wheat as the first ingredient.

Ingredients of two different breads:

This one is whole wheat

Example 1: Whole-wheat flour, water, wheat gluten, corn syrup, honey, soybean oil, yeast

This one is **not** whole wheat

Example 2: Wheat flour, water, whole wheat flour, corn syrup, honey, soybean oil, yeast

Even though Example 2 contains whole-wheat flour, it is not a whole-grain product because it is not the first listed ingredient.

Important reminders:

- ◆ On labels, wheat flour is another name for white flour.
- ◆ "Enriched" means that iron and B-vitamins have been added back to refined grains. Most of the fiber, zinc and other vitamins and minerals are gone.
- ◆ Whole wheat means that all parts of the wheat kernel are included — bran, germ and endosperm.
- ◆ Packaging can be misleading. Ignore pictures and big print that may give the false impression of being a whole-wheat product — read the ingredient list instead.
- ◆ Look for fiber grams per serving on the Nutrition Label

How can you add more whole grains to your daily meals?

- ◆ Try ready-to-eat or ready-to-cook whole-grain cereal for breakfast.
- ◆ Choose whole-grain breads, tortillas, bagels, pita pockets or rolls.
- ◆ Eat popcorn for a snack.
- ◆ Add whole grains to mixed dishes. Try adding wild rice to soups or casseroles.
- ◆ Add oats to cookies or other desserts.
- ◆ Use oats in place of bread crumbs in meatloaf.
- ◆ Substitute one-quarter to one-half of the white flour with whole-grain flour in recipes.

REFERENCES

Information from *Healthful Whole Grains*

Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., CDE; Kansas State University, September 2002.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture, January 2005.

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What are some ideas for whole-grain foods?

- ◆ Brown rice (regular, quick)
- ◆ Oatmeal, whole or rolled oats (regular, quick, instant)
- ◆ Pearl barley
- ◆ Popcorn
- ◆ Whole wheat
- ◆ Wild rice

Other types:

- ◆ Amaranth
- ◆ Buckwheat or kasha, buckwheat groats
- ◆ Cracked wheat (also called bulgur)
- ◆ Kamut
- ◆ Millet
- ◆ Quinoa
- ◆ Spelt
- ◆ Teff
- ◆ Triticales
- ◆ Whole-grain corn or cornmeal (yellow and white)
- ◆ Whole rye