



A Personal Message From Your Registered Dietitian

More and more is discovered each day about the health benefits of whole grains. All of this new information raises questions for many people. That's why we've devoted this issue of *Nutrition 411* to clarifying the topics of whole grains and fiber. We've also included tips and



suggestions to help you work these nutritionally important foods into your menus.

In this issue, you'll discover the differences between whole grains and high-fiber foods to better understand food labels. You'll also learn how to choose the best

breakfast cereal, add variety to your morning bowl of oatmeal, and create a grocery list packed with whole-grain foods, and find out how to prepare some unusual grains.

In This Issue

PAGE NUTRITIONARY

1 Understanding Health Claims and Labels

GRAIN GLOSSARY

2 What to Do With Unusual Grains

WHOLE-GRAIN GOODNESS

2 The Smart Shopper's Shopping List

A WHOLE-GRAIN COMMITMENT

3 Start Your Day With Whole Grains

THE 2011 DIETARY GUIDELINES

3 Changing the Way We Think About Food

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

4 Test Your Knowledge About Whole Grains

DECODING THE GROCERY STORE

5 Choosing the Best Cereals

MAILBOX

5 Why Are Whole Grains and Fiber So Important?

COOK'S CORNER

6 Oatmeal Three Ways

NUTRITIONARY

Understanding Health Claims and Labels

The health claims and labels regarding whole grains and fiber on food labels may confuse you. These definitions should help you sort out what's what before your next grocery shopping trip.

"Good source of fiber"

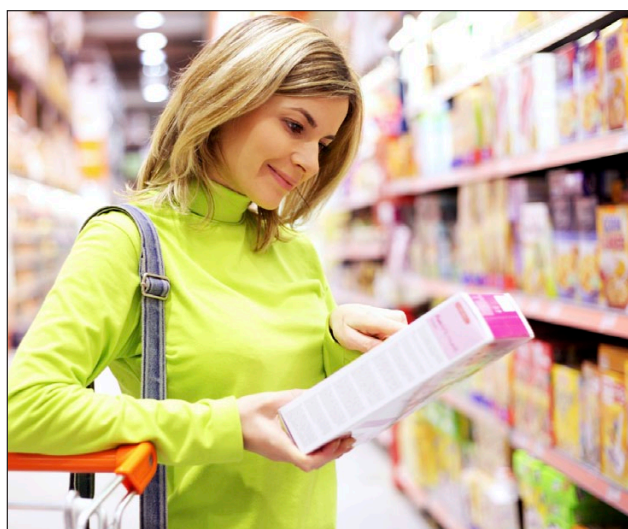
The food must contain at least 10% of the daily value (DV) of fiber or at least 2.5 grams (g) fiber/serving to carry this label.

"Excellent source of fiber"

The food must contain at least 20% of the DV of fiber or at least 5 g fiber/serving to carry this label.

Whole grain

Most of these products contain little or no refined white flour. Look at the label's ingredient list to see how far down on the list the enriched wheat flour, unbleached white flour, or wheat flour appears—the lower the better.



Whole-grain white

This label usually appears on bread, but it does not necessarily mean anything specific. In the best case scenario, the bread was made with an albino variety of wheat. Most breads with this label contain a mix of whole and refined flour from red wheat. Look for the brands that contain more whole flour and less refined flour.

12-grain or multigrain

It does not matter how many grains are in a product. What matters is how many of those grains are whole grains.

"May prevent heart disease"

This claim is approved for use on almost any food that is made from at least 51% whole grains and is low in saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium.

What to Do With Unusual Grains

Amaranth: These tiny kernels, usually pale yellow, are porridge-like when simmered, making amaranth useful as a food thickener. You can bake or steam amaranth as well, and it is available as cereal and flour. Many people add a strongly flavored liquid to this grain when cooking it—broth and tomato juice are good choices. It is good when mixed with other grains and when mixed with vegetables as a stir-fry. You also can toast amaranth, similar to popcorn, and use it as a breading.

Barley: Most of the barley in the United States is used in beer production. Barley is chewier than rice. Barley flakes are served as a hot cereal. Grits are toasted and broken into small pieces. It generally is simmered or used as an ingredient in casseroles or soups. Cooking time varies from a negligible amount of time for the preparation of grits to about 1½ hours for hulled barley. Barley and fruit make a pleasing breakfast dish. Substitute barley for rice or pasta in almost any dish.

Buckwheat: Buckwheat is used as an alternative to rice as a side dish or ingredient. It pairs well with beef, root vegetables, cabbage, winter squash, and eggplant. Buckwheat grits are finely ground groats, served as a hot cereal. Buckwheat flour is available in most markets and is commonly used in pancake preparation. Kasha consists of buckwheat kernels that are

roasted and hulled, and then cracked into granules. Kasha is good as a filling for meat, poultry, or vegetables. Kasha is also excellent for cold salads. Simmer or bake kasha, whole buckwheat, and buckwheat grits. Cooking buckwheat kernels with a beaten egg prevents the kernels from sticking together.

Bulgur: Steamed, dried, and cracked-wheat berries, bulgur cooks like brown rice. Substitute it for rice in all dishes. Use the finely ground variety to prepare a hot breakfast cereal.

Oats: Oat bran is created from the outer layer of oat groats and usually is sold as a hot cereal. Oat groats are whole-oat kernels, which are cooked like rice. Rolled oats are heated and pressed flat. Steel-cut oats are groats that are vertically sliced and have a chewy texture when cooked. Oats are the main ingredient of granola and muesli. Oat groats and steel-cut oats take a longer time than most grains to prepare. Old-fashioned oats take about 5 minutes to cook, while quick-cooking oats take only about 1 minute. All forms of oats are good eaten as breakfast cereal. Prepare groats into a pilaf and serve as a side dish. Add steel-cut oats to soups and stews. Use rolled oats as a filling for poultry and vegetables. Add toasted oats to salads, use as a breading for poultry, or add to baked goods. Use rolled oats in place of 20% of the wheat flour in yeast breads, and one part to every two parts of wheat flour in most other baked goods.

Quinoa: Quinoa grains are flat, pointed ovals. Quinoa comes in a variety of colors, including pale yellow, red, and black. When cooked, the external germ spirals out, creating a “tail.” Rinse prior to cooking. Brown in a skillet for 5 minutes prior to simmering or baking. It is good when served as a pilaf, in a baked casserole, in vegetable soup, or as a cold salad, and is especially good when combined with buckwheat. Add quinoa to puddings.

Rye: Rye is a bluish-gray grain, similar in appearance to wheat, except for the color. Rye flakes are similar to rolled oats. Whole rye berries, groats, and kernels resemble wheat berries. Cracked rye is the quickest-cooking variety. Simmer rye berries with milder-tasting grains, such as brown rice or wheat berries. Combine cracked rye with cracked wheat. Combine rye flakes with oatmeal. Rye berries are good when cooked in broth with chopped nuts and raisins. Use cooked rye berries as an ingredient in poultry stuffing. Cracked rye is good when cooked in fruit juice with dried fruit. Add rye flakes to ground-beef mixtures.

WHOLE-GRAIN GOODNESS

The Smart Shopper's Shopping List

Take this list with you the next time that you go to the grocery store to make sure that you stock up on whole-grain foods:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain cold cereal | <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain crackers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown rice | <input type="checkbox"/> Popcorn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quinoa | <input type="checkbox"/> Barley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oatmeal | <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain cereal bars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgur | <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-wheat pasta |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rye | <input type="checkbox"/> Corn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-wheat bread | <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-grain muffin mix |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sorghum | |

Start Your Day With Whole Grains

A study done by General Mills showed that while 61% of Americans believe that they consume enough whole grains, only 5% actually do. General Mills is committed to doing something about this disparity. The US Dietary Guidelines recommend that people consume 48 grams (g) of whole grains each day. The average person only eats about one sixth of this amount.

General Mills guarantees that every Big G cereal that it produces contains at least 8 g of whole grains/serving. These cereals include the popular Cheerios®, Cinnamon Toast Crunch®, Oatmeal Crisp, Chex®, Fiber One®, Wheaties®, and Total®. Furthermore, more than 20 of these Big G cereals contain at least 16 g of whole grain/serving, making it easy to get one third of the recommended daily allowance for whole grain before you're even out the door in the morning. This isn't a new initiative either; General Mills has made this guarantee since 2005.



Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals are the number one source of whole grains in America. General Mills understands that whole grains are important for heart health, reducing cancer risk, managing diabetes, keeping you regular, and promoting weight management. General Mills is committed to spreading the word and making sure that its products make it as easy as possible for Americans to garner all of the benefits of whole grains.

Big G cereals have the white check on the front of the box, making it simple to make your selection in the cereal aisle.

SENSIBLE SNACKING

Try snacking on popcorn, whole-grain crackers, oatmeal cookies, whole-grain chips or pretzels, or whole-grain cereal bars.



DECREASE YOUR RISK WITH WHOLE GRAINS

According to some studies, consumption of an adequate amount of whole grains can decrease the risk of heart disease by 25%–36%, the risk of type 2 diabetes by 21%–27%, the risk of digestive cancers by 21%–43%, and the risk of stroke by 37%.



THE 2011 DIETARY GUIDELINES

Changing the Way We Think About Food

The new dietary guidelines, released on January 31, 2011, may help to change the way that Americans think about food. The following is a brief look at some of what the new guidelines will cover.

A flexible approach to diet

The guidelines recommend a flexible approach to diet, with an emphasis on whole foods that are low in saturated fat and sodium, such as whole grains, produce, skim milk, and lean sources of protein. This is called the Total Diet Approach, which encourages consumers to become mindful eaters, and take care in

choosing nutrient-rich foods and deciding what and how much to eat.

This will necessitate reducing our intake of calories from added fats and sugars. Currently 35% of the average person's calories come from added fats and sugars.

Recommended intake

The panel's preliminary report points out that Americans currently consume less than 20% of the recommended amount of whole grains, less than 60% for vegetables, less than 50% for fruit,

[CONT'D ON PAGE 4]

and less than 60% for milk and milk products. This diet makes it nearly impossible to attain the recommended amounts of vitamin D, fiber, calcium, and potassium.

Fiber

Most Americans do not consume enough fiber. Concentrated sources of fiber include whole grains, cooked beans and peas, vegetables, nuts, and dried fruits. Currently, the major sources of fiber in the American diet are white flour and potatoes. These actually are not good sources of fiber, but because we consume so much of these foods, they are our top providers of fiber.

Potassium

Potassium, a mineral important for preventing hypertension, will receive emphasis. In fact, the advisory panel has recommended more than doubling the current goal of 2000 milligrams (mg)/day to 4700 mg. Potassium is found in oranges, bananas, tomatoes, spinach, kale, prunes, dried beans, potatoes, honeydew, and cantaloupe.

Fats

Not all fats are created equal, and the new guidelines illustrate this, with an emphasis on the monounsaturated fats found in fatty fish, such as salmon and tuna, nuts, and healthier oils, such as olive, canola, and walnut oils.

Tools to help

The 2011 guidelines offer tools to help people calculate estimates of how many calories they should consume each day.

Pregnant women and children

The guidelines place more emphasis on helping pregnant women and children meet their special and unique dietary needs.

Community barriers

For the first time ever, the guidelines identify community barriers, such as lack of grocery stores and farmers' markets in some areas of the United States, which impede healthy lifestyles. The recommendations include tips for working around these environmental problems.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

Test Your Knowledge About Whole Grains

1. How many servings of whole grains should you consume each day?
 - a. One or two
 - b. Three or more
 - c. Six or more
2. Which of the following is a whole-grain food?
 - a. Brown rice
 - b. Corn flakes
 - c. Poppy seed roll
3. To carry the Whole Grains Council 100% Whole Grain Stamp, a food must contain at least:
 - a. 5 grams (g) of whole grain
 - b. 8 g of whole grain
 - c. 16 g of whole grain
4. Which of the following is not a part of a whole grain?
 - a. Seed
 - b. Endosperm
 - c. Germ
 - d. Bran
5. Which of the following is most plentiful in whole grains?
 - a. Vitamin A
 - b. Vitamin C
 - c. B vitamins
 - d. Calcium
6. All whole-grain foods are high in fiber.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answers on page 5



Choosing the Best Cereals

To choose the best cereals, memorize these five guidelines.

The cereal should contain:

- At least 3 grams (g) fiber/serving
- No more than 6 g sugar/serving
- No trans fats (no "partially hydrogenated oil" should appear in the ingredients list)
- No more than 175 milligrams (mg) sodium/serving
- At least 3 g protein/serving



While shopping, look for the white check for Whole Grain Guaranteed. The Whole Grain Guarantee means that the cereal has at least 8 g of whole grain/serving. At least 48 g of whole grain is recommended daily.

Answers to Test Your Knowledge About Whole Grains

1. **b. Three or more.** The dietary guidelines emphasize whole grains and recommend at least three 1-ounce-equivalent servings/day.
2. **a. Brown rice.** The corn flakes and the poppy seed roll do not contain the bran, endosperm, and germ of the grain.
3. **c. 16 g of whole grain.** The stamp is used on foods that contain all whole grain and have at least 16 g of whole grain/serving.
4. **a. Seed.** A whole grain contains the bran, endosperm, and germ of the grain.
5. **c. B vitamins.** Whole grains provide B vitamins, fiber, carbohydrate, trace minerals, plant stanols/sterols, antioxidants, phytonutrients, and magnesium.
6. **b. False.** Some high-fiber grain foods are not whole grains.

Mailbox

I have been hearing about how good whole grains are for you, but I've also heard how important it is that we get enough fiber each day. Lately, I've noticed that not all foods labeled as whole grain contain much fiber. Why is this?

Good for you for reading labels so diligently! You're correct. Whole grains are not necessarily high in fiber. Different grains naturally contain different amounts of fiber. For instance, bran cereals are high in fiber, but bran is not a whole grain. This is because



a grain must stay intact, meaning that it must contain the bran, the endosperm, and the germ of the grain for designation as a whole grain.

It is recommended that most people get at least three servings of whole grains each day, although this varies based on age and sex. For example, a teenage boy might benefit from four or five servings a day.

Whole grains contain carbohydrate, B vitamins, iron, magnesium, zinc, copper, plant stanols and sterols, and phytonutrients. Whole grains are important to reduce the risks of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. It also seems that when a person eats enough whole grains, they have better digestive health and weight control.

Most women should aim to consume 25 g of fiber/day, and most men should aim for 35 g/day. Similar to whole grains, fiber aids in the prevention of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and gastrointestinal conditions, such as diverticulitis and constipation. Both fiber and whole grains are very important for your health and for similar reasons, but they're not always found in the same food items.

Look for the 'RD'

Get your nutrition advice from a registered dietitian (RD). RDs are the real deal!

RD

IT'S OK TO SNACK BEFORE MEALS

It takes 20 minutes for your brain to register that you're full after eating. This is why a small healthful snack about 20 minutes before mealtime could lead to you eating less of the meal.

Examples of a small snack include whole-grain crackers and peanut butter or other nut butter, a packet of instant oatmeal, or half a turkey sandwich and 1 cup of reduced-sodium soup.



Oatmeal Three Ways

Oatmeal is a satisfying and healthy way to start the day, and oatmeal is both a whole grain and high in fiber. Here are three recipes to add variety to your morning meal.

Cinnamon-Apple Oatmeal

—MAKES 1 SERVING—

INGREDIENTS

½ cup (C) chopped peeled apple
½ C old-fashioned (5-minute) oatmeal
1 tablespoon (Tbsp) toasted wheat germ or wheat bran
¼ teaspoon (tsp) ground cinnamon
½ C nonfat or low-fat milk (or use evaporated nonfat or low-fat milk for extra protein)
½ C water

Toppings (optional)

1½ Tbsp chopped walnuts or pecans
1½ Tbsp raisins or dried cranberries

DIRECTIONS

Place the apples and 1 Tbsp of water in a bowl (capacity of about 3½ C).^{*} Place the bowl in a microwave oven and cover with a microwave splatter shield. Cook at high power for 2 minutes or until the apples soften.

Add the oats, wheat germ or bran, and cinnamon to the apples and stir to mix. Add the milk and water. Stir again. Cover with the splatter shield and cook for 2 minutes. Stir and cook for another 1–2 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed. Watch closely during the last part of cooking. Stir, if needed, to prevent the oatmeal from boiling over.

Let sit for 1–2 minutes before serving. Top with some additional milk and low-calorie sweetener, if desired. Sprinkle with toppings, if desired.

Per serving: 257 calories, 45 grams (g) carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 3.7 g fat, 0.8 g saturated fat, 2 milligrams (mg) cholesterol, 13 g protein, 66 mg sodium, 180 mg calcium

Diabetic exchanges: 2 starch, ½ nonfat milk, ½ fruit

^{*}A pasta bowl is just about the right size.

Oatmeal With Apricots and Pecans

—MAKES 1 SERVING—

INGREDIENTS

½ C old-fashioned (5-minute) oatmeal
1 Tbsp wheat bran
1 Tbsp wheat germ
1½ Tbsp finely chopped dried apricots (or substitute dried cherries, dried plums, raisins, or other dried fruits)
½ C nonfat or low-fat milk
½ C water
1½ Tbsp chopped pecans or walnuts



DIRECTIONS

Place the oats, wheat bran, wheat germ, and apricots in a bowl (capacity of about 3½ C).^{*} Add the milk and water. Stir to mix.

Place the bowl in a microwave oven and cover with a microwave splatter shield. Cook at high power for 2 minutes. Stir and cook for an additional 1–2 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed. Watch closely during the last part of cooking. Stir, if needed, to prevent the oatmeal from boiling over.

Let sit for 1–2 minutes before serving. Top with the pecans. Add some additional milk and low-calorie sweetener, if desired.

Per serving: 339 calories, 48 g carbohydrates, 8.9 g fiber, 11.8 g fat, 1.4 g saturated fat, 2 mg cholesterol, 15 g protein, 68 mg sodium, 191 mg calcium

Diabetic exchanges: 2 starch, ½ nonfat milk, ½ fruit, 2 fat

Peach-Almond Oatmeal

—MAKES 1 SERVING—

INGREDIENTS

½ C old-fashioned (5-minute) oatmeal
1 Tbsp wheat bran or toasted wheat germ
⅓ C canned peaches in juice, drained and chopped
1 Tbsp sliced almonds (or use pecans)
½ C nonfat or low-fat milk (or use evaporated low-fat milk)
½ C water

DIRECTIONS

Place the oats, wheat bran or germ, peaches, and almonds in a bowl (capacity of about 3½ C).^{*} Add the milk and water. Stir to mix.

Place the bowl in a microwave oven and cover with a microwave splatter shield. Cook at high power for 2 minutes. Stir and cook for an additional 1–2 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed. Watch closely during the last part of cooking. Stir, if needed, to prevent the oatmeal from boiling over.

Let sit for 1–2 minutes before serving. Top with some additional milk and low-calorie sweetener, if desired.

Stove top method: Place all of the ingredients in a 1-quart pot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Cover and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally until the liquid is absorbed. Let sit for 2 minutes before serving.

Per serving: 276 calories, 46 g carbohydrate, 7.6 g fiber, 6 g fat, 0.9 g saturated fat, 2 mg cholesterol, 13 g protein, 69 mg sodium, 194 mg calcium

Diabetic exchanges: 2 starch, ½ nonfat milk, ½ fruit, 1 fat

Reprinted with permission of Sandra Woodruff, MS, RD, LD/N. Visit EatSmartToday.com for additional healthy recipes.