

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner, Oh My!

The Wonderful World of Grains

Uses of Grains

As you can see from the title, grains are VERY diverse. At breakfast, lunch, or dinner (Oh my!), they fit right in and always taste great!

Some examples of grains include:

- ◆ Rice
- ◆ Pasta
- ◆ Oatmeal
- ◆ Popcorn
- ◆ Bread
- ◆ Cereal
- ◆ Crackers



The average American diet includes plenty of grains! However, it usually does not include enough **whole grains**. Keep reading to find out more about whole grains and their benefits!

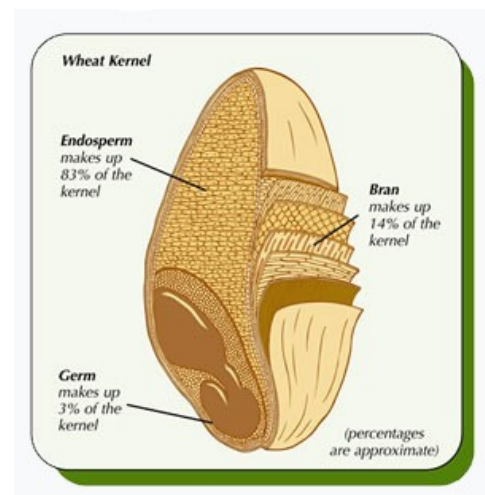
The Benefits of Whole Grains

Whole Grains are...

- ◆ High in FIBER! Fiber can...
 - ⇒ Promote digestive health
 - ⇒ Lower blood cholesterol and therefore reduce risk of heart disease
 - ⇒ Fill you up! It has been shown that fiber plays a role in helping you feel full.
- ◆ Low in fat
- ◆ Cholesterol free
- ◆ Inexpensive
- ◆ Easy to prepare

What is a Whole Grain?

A **WHOLE GRAIN** is an unprocessed grain, which makes it more nutritious. The fact that it is unprocessed means that it still has its bran, aleurone, and germ (shown below) which contain fiber, protein, B Vitamins, Vitamin E, antioxidants, and even some minerals. When a grain is processed (like white rice, pasta, and white bread), you lose all of these nutrients! OUCH!



LOW IN FAT!
HIGH IN FIBER!

Q&A: The Skinny on Grains

Q: How many servings do I need?

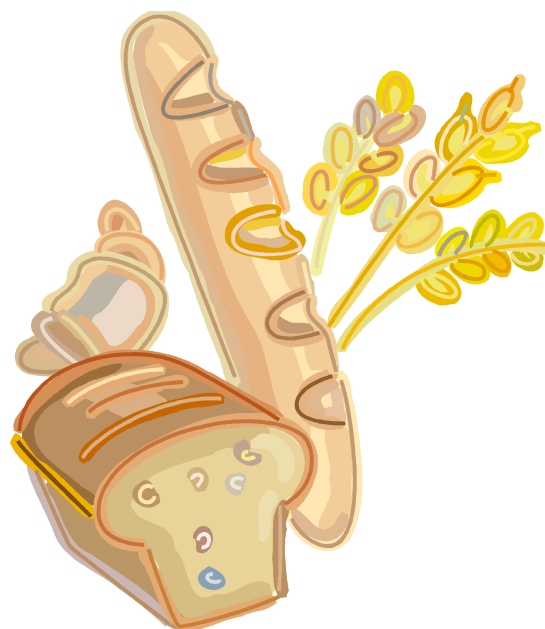
A: Your needs are determined by age and gender, but the average person on a 2,000 calorie diet would need 6 ounces of grains each day.

Q: What counts as a serving?

A: 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta, or oatmeal, 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of cereal, 1 mini bagel, 3 cups of popcorn (see mypyramid.gov for more examples)

Q: What else do I need to know?

A: You may realize that your diet is full of grains so there is no problem, right? Actually, it's most important that half of your grains are **whole grains**.



Set a goal to improve your whole grain intake!



WARNING!!!—Processed Grains

The big dilemma... choosing a TRUE healthy snack!

Problem—Food manufacturers are quick to point out the strong points of their product but very slow to inform you about the “not-so-hot” points.

Solution—Learn to read Food Labels! You should look for foods that are:

- ◆ HIGH in fiber, AND...
- ◆ LOW in added sugars and sodium

Grain Storage

You may have heard that grains should be stored in a cool, dry place. So what is COOL, and what is DRY?

Cool—70°F - 75°F (room temp)

Dry—Low humidity; for this reason, it is sometimes a good choice to store flour and some other grains in the refrigerator or freezer. Also, be sure to store them in an *airtight* container!

Under these conditions, grains are good for...

Refined Grains: 6 months-1 year

Whole Grains: 3-6 months