

Live Healthy Georgia- Seniors Taking Charge!

September 2010 Newsletter
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It's National Whole Grains Month!



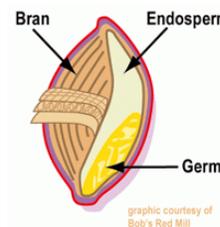
Consumers are increasingly aware that fruits and vegetables contain disease-fighting phytochemicals and antioxidants, but do not realize that whole grains are also a great source of these key nutrients. Whole grains are complex carbohydrates including grains such as wheat, corn, rice, oats, barley, quinoa, sorghum, spelt, and rye. They provide fiber and important vitamins and minerals that help lower the risk of many chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and obesity. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends making ½ of your grain choices whole grains to maintain good health. Adults 51 years and older should consume at least three 1-ounce equivalents of whole grains daily.

Examples of 1-ounce equivalents

1/2 cup cooked oatmeal
1 slice whole wheat bread
1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
*Check MyPyramid.gov for more examples

So, what is a whole grain? A whole grain is a grain that has all layers of

the grain kernel including the bran, germ, and endosperm. When whole grains are processed the bran and germ are removed and they are called refined grains. This process removes the dietary fiber and vitamins and minerals and leaves mainly carbohydrate and little nutritional value. Most refined grains are enriched, meaning certain B vitamins and iron are added back after processing. Even though these nutrients are added back, fiber is still lost. That is why it is important for all people including older adults to consume adequate amounts of whole grains to achieve fiber recommendations.



Whole Grains

Whole wheat bread
Popcorn
Oatmeal
Brown rice

Refined Grains

White flour
White bread
White rice
Cornbread

Gluten Free?

Millions of people can not eat gluten including the 3 million Americans with celiac disease or others with wheat allergies. Gluten intolerant people CAN still eat whole grains! There are many

gluten-free grains that these individuals can consume such as buckwheat, corn, millet, quinoa, rice, sorghum, and wild rice. Make sure to check food labels and check out www.gluten.net for information on more acceptable foods.



Identifying Whole Grains

Adding whole grains to your diet can be easy if you know what to look for when

shopping at your local food store. First, look for the 100% whole grain stamp on the package. The stamp indicates that the product has a full serving of whole grain or more and that ALL the grains are whole grains. A regular whole grain stamp indicates that the product contains only ½ a serving of whole grain. Second, if the package does not have a stamp then look for “100% whole grain” on the package or look at the food label. Check for the grams of whole grain or a whole grain as the first ingredient in the ingredient list. These are good indicators that the product is a whole grain food.

BEWARE, some products may say “whole grains” without much detail, but contain only miniscule amounts. Also, the words “made with whole grain”, “organic flour”, “multigrain”, and “wheat flour” may portray accurate descriptions of the package contents, but some parts of the grain may be missing resulting less nutritional value.

Enjoying whole grains

Every whole grain in your diet helps! There are many ways to incorporate whole grains into a healthy and delicious meal. You can easily add them to your favorite recipes or spice things up by trying something new. Consider the following ideas:

- *Substitute* a whole grain for a refined grain such as whole wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice
- Snack on popcorn without added butter and salt
- Add whole grain flour or oatmeal when baking cookies or other treats
- Add barley to your favorite homemade soup
- Add oatmeal or whole grain cereal to yogurt for breakfast
- Use whole cornmeal for corn bread or corn cakes
- Try something new such as quinoa or tabbouleh salad



Resources:

The Whole Grain Council:
<http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/>

MyPyramid:
<http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/grains.html>

Centers for Disease Control:
<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/carbs.html>