

## Choose Whole Grains



Adding more whole grains to your family's meals is a smart move. Not only do they provide the vitamins, nutrients and minerals needed to keep your family healthy and strong, but whole grains also contain dietary fiber, which may help reduce your risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and other health complications.

Grains are divided into two subgroups: whole grains and refined grains. Whole grains contain the entire kernel — the bran, germ and endosperm. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend making half of the grains you eat whole, so use whole grains instead of a refined-grain product.

### How to Find Whole Grains

Remember, being brown doesn't make bread whole wheat and being white may not mean that bread is made with just refined white flour. Finding whole-grain breads takes some label reading skills. Any bread labeled "whole wheat" must be made with 100-percent whole-wheat flour.

Also, did you know that even if bread labels advertise "seven-grain" or "multigrain," they are not necessarily whole grain products? Check the Nutrition Facts Panel to make sure whole-wheat flour is listed as the first ingredient and find loaves made mostly with whole-wheat or other whole-grain flour.

### Add Whole Grains to Your Meals

Want to add more whole grains to your meals? Change your cooking style to include more whole grains and boost the fiber content of meals. Partner whole grains — brown rice and vegetable stir-fry or a whole-wheat pita stuffed with salad. Fortify mixed dishes with high-fiber ingredients, perhaps bran or oatmeal added to meat loaf.

Looking for other ways to make half your family's grains whole?

- Start with breakfast. Choose a fiber-rich, whole-grain breakfast cereal, oatmeal or toast. Check the grams of fiber per serving; more fiber will keep you feeling fuller, longer.
- Choose whole grains over refined items when selecting breads, buns, bagels, tortillas, pastas and other grains.
- Experiment with different grains such as buckwheat, bulgur, millet, quinoa, sorghum, or whole rye or barley. To save time, cook extra bulgur or barley and freeze half to heat and serve later as a quick side dish.
- Enjoy whole grains as a snack. Three cups of whole-grain, air-popped popcorn contains 3.5 grams of fiber and only 95 calories. Also, try 100-percent whole-wheat or rye crackers.