



# Whole Grains

Make at least half the grains in your diet whole grains. Whole-grain versions of rice, bread, cereal, flour and pasta can be found at most grocery stores. Many whole-grain foods come ready to eat. These include a variety of breads, pastas and cereals. Examples include:

- Barley
- Brown rice
- Buckwheat
- Bulgur (cracked wheat)
- Millet
- Oatmeal
- Popcorn
- Whole-wheat bread, pasta or crackers
- Wild rice

It's not always easy to tell what kind of grains a product has, especially bread. For instance, a brown bread isn't necessarily whole wheat — the color may come from added coloring. If you're not sure something has whole grains, check the product label or the Nutrition Facts panel. Look for the word "whole" on the package, and make sure whole grains appear among the first items in the ingredient list.

White whole-wheat bread is made with whole grains, just as is regular whole-wheat bread. White whole-wheat bread also is nutritionally similar to that of regular whole-wheat bread. So if you prefer the taste and texture of white bread, but want the nutritional benefits of whole wheat, choose white whole-wheat bread — not regular, refined white bread.

If all of the grains you eat are whole grains, you may need to take extra care to get sufficient folic acid, a B vitamin. While most refined-grain products are enriched, whole grains are not typically fortified with folate.

Look for whole grains that have been fortified with folic acid, such as some ready-to-eat cereals. Folate is also found in other foods, including fruits, vegetables and legumes. Folic acid is especially important if you're a woman who could become pregnant or is pregnant.

Try these tips to add more whole grains to your meals and snacks:

- Enjoy breakfasts that include whole-grain cereals, such as whole-wheat bran flakes (some bran flakes may just have the bran, not the whole grain), shredded wheat or oatmeal.
- Substitute whole-wheat toast or whole-grain bagels for plain bagels. Substitute low-fat muffins made with whole-grain cereals, such as oatmeal or others, for pastries.
- Make sandwiches using whole-grain breads or rolls. Swap out white-flour tortillas with whole-wheat versions.
- Replace white rice with kasha, brown rice, wild rice or bulgur.
- Feature wild rice or barley in soups, stews, casseroles and salads.
- Add whole grains, such as cooked brown rice or whole-grain bread crumbs, to ground meat or poultry for extra body.
- Use rolled oats or crushed whole-wheat bran cereal in recipes instead of dry bread crumbs.

Eating a variety of whole grains not only ensures that you get more health-promoting nutrients but also helps make your meals and snacks more interesting.

Source - <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/whole-grains/art-20047826?pg=2>

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