

Truth About Whole Grains

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Whole grains contain the entire kernel – bran, germ and endosperm. eg- whole wheat flour, brown rice, oat meal etc. Whole grains provide fibre, B vitamins (riboflavin, thiamin, folate and niacin) and minerals (iron, magnesium and Selenium).

During the milling process bran and germ are often removed to give *Refined Cereal*. This process gives the grain a finer texture and long shelf life, but it removes the fiber, iron and many B vitamins. E.g. of refined grains are All-purpose flour, white rice, white bread. Most refined grains are enriched with certain B vitamins and iron.

The *Dietary Guidelines Of Americans* recommend making half of the grains you eat whole grains. So use whole grains instead of refined grains product. The amount of grains you need to eat depends on your age, sex and physical activity. To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product – such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice. It's important to substitute the whole-grain product for the refined one, rather than adding the whole-grain product.

Foods labelled with the words "multi-grain," "stone-ground," "cracked wheat "or" bran" is usually not whole-grain products. *Colour is not an indication of a whole grain*. Bread can be brown because of molasses or other added ingredients. Check the nutrition facts to make sure *whole wheat flour is listed as the first ingredient*.

Read the food label's ingredient list. Look for terms that indicate added sugars (such as sucrose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, malt syrup, maple syrup, molasses, or raw sugar) that add extra calories. Choose whole grain foods with fewer added sugars, fats and sodium.

Consuming whole grains containing fibre, may reduce constipation, blood cholesterol levels and may lower the risk of heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes.

People who can't eat wheat gluten can eat whole grains if they choose carefully. There are many whole grain products certified gluten free, examples are oats or oat meal without traces of grains containing gluten, popcorn, cornmeal flour, brown rice, wild rice that fits gluten free diet needs.