**Whole Grains**

Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel (bran, germ, endosperm). Refined grains have been processed/milled to remove the bran and germ. This gives the grain a finer texture and improves the shelf life. Unfortunately, this also decreases the nutritional value by removing dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins. Most refined products are enriched after processing to add back certain B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid) and iron but the fiber is not.

**Commonly Eaten Grain Products**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole Grains</th>
<th>Refined Grains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brown rice</td>
<td>cereal: cornflakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cereals: muesli</td>
<td>cornbread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buckwheat</td>
<td>corn tortillas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bulgur (cracked wheat)</td>
<td>couscous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oatmeal</td>
<td>crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>popcorn</td>
<td>flour tortillas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole grain barley</td>
<td>grits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole grain cornmeal</td>
<td>noodles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole rye</td>
<td>pasta (spaghetti/macaroni)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole wheat crackers</td>
<td>pitas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole wheat pasta</td>
<td>pretzels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole wheat bread/rolls</td>
<td>white bread/rolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole wheat tortillas</td>
<td>wild rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less common:</td>
<td>Some of these may come in a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amaranth, millet, quinoa,</td>
<td>whole wheat version - check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sorghum, triticale</td>
<td>the ingredient list for “whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wheat” or “whole grain.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Make Half Your Grains Whole**

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans states that consuming at least three or more ounces (three servings) of whole grains per day can reduce the risk of several chronic diseases and may help in maintaining your weight. The goal is to make at least half your grain intake from whole grains. This may be difficult for younger children to achieve, so they can just gradually increase their intake as they grow. At all ages and calorie levels, we should consume at least half our grains as whole grains to get enough fiber in our diet.

**What Is in the Grain Group?**

Wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or any other grain qualify as being in the grain group. Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas are grain products (made from grains) and also are included in this group.

Grains are divided into two subgroups: whole grains and refined grains.
Adults need at least five ounces a day with at least three ounces coming from whole grains.

The following are approximately one ounce each:
- 1 slice of bread
- 1 tortilla
- 1 small roll
- ½ English muffin/bagel/pita
- 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- ½ cup cooked rice/pasta
- 5-6 crackers
- 9 3-ring pretzels
- 3 cups popped popcorn
- 1 pancake (4”)

Easy Tips to Increase Your Whole Grains

1. Try a snack mix made from ready-to-eat, whole-grain cereals.
2. Choose a whole-grain (whole wheat or oatmeal) muffin.
3. Use whole-grain bread/cracker crumbs in meatloaf.
4. Try brown rice stuffing (cooked brown rice, onion, celery, and seasonings) in baked green peppers or tomatoes.
5. Choose cookies made with some whole-grain flour or oatmeal.
6. Try a whole-grain snack chip, such as baked tortilla chips.
7. For a change, try brown rice or whole-wheat pasta.
8. Use whole grains in mixed dishes, such as pearl barley in vegetable soup and bulgur in casseroles or salads.

Whole-Wheat Oatmeal Pancakes

Ingredients:
- 3/4 cup whole-wheat flour
- 3/4 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg, slightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 ½ cups + 2 tablespoons buttermilk*, divided
- 2 tablespoons toasted, chopped pecans (optional)

Directions:
1. Soak oats in 3/4 cup buttermilk for 10 minutes.
2. Mix dry ingredients in a large bowl.
3. Stir in wet ingredients and oat mixture until just combined. Add pecans (optional).
5. Work in batches, pouring 1/4 cup of batter onto griddle and cook until bubbles appear and underside is golden brown, about 1 minute. Flip with a spatula and cook other side about 1 minute more. Lightly oil griddle between batches.

For a nutritious change, top with natural applesauce, sliced bananas, fresh or frozen berries (blueberries, strawberries, etc.) instead of pancake syrup.

*If you don’t have buttermilk on hand, you can make sour milk by adding 1 tablespoon white vinegar into a measuring cup and filling to the 1-cup mark with milk.

Information in this newsletter was adapted from Inside the Pyramid at MyPyramid.gov

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