

# WHOLE GRAINS

## *Nutrition*

### **WHOLE GRAINS – MAKE ALL YOUR GRAINS WHOLE**

There is no question, we need to eliminate our reliance on white refined carbohydrates. They offer no nutrition value and, in fact can have health consequence. Conversely, whole grains offer fiber, minerals, vitamins and phytonutrients. As you may already know, a whole grain is made of 3 parts: the bran, the endosperm and the germ. A refined grain is stripped of the nutrient-dense germ and the high-fiber bran components, leaving only the starchy endosperm.

Eating whole grains regularly has known health benefits which include:

1. Reduced risk of diabetes and heart disease
2. Improved blood pressure
3. Weight control
4. Improved digestion
5. Improved energy from the high-quantity of B-Vitamins
6. Appetite control

Conventional grains, including whole grains can contain significant pesticide residues so it is a good idea to buy organic grains when available. Also, it is best to buy grains in the most whole form possible, rather than quick-cooking grains to obtain the most health benefit. If you are buying a grain-based product with multiple ingredients, make sure the first is whole grain. But, its better and much more cost effective to buy the whole, unprocessed grains.

Often, I am asked if you need to eat whole grains every day or with every meal. The answer is no. If you do eat grains, especially daily, make sure they are whole grains. While I do recommend including grains regularly in a healthy diet, you can certainly eat a healthy, balanced diet without including grains with every meal. Other great sources of vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals are: vegetables, fruit, beans and seeds.

If you have gluten intolerance or celiac disease, select a whole grain without gluten – there are many including brown rice, quinoa, amaranth and millet just check the label to make sure it is has not come in contact with gluten-containing grains. Remember, gluten free does not mean a product is healthier or less refined so try not to just substitute a favorite refined product such as pretzels or packaged cereal with a gluten-free alternative.

# WHOLE GRAINS

## Nutrition

*If you are new to whole grains or have not branched out from your standard favorites, here are 5 whole grains, beyond oats and brown rice, worth trying:*

GRAIN	ABOUT	HOW TO SERVE	NUTRITION
<b>Amaranth</b>	A gluten free grain with a mild, nutty flavor and smooth consistency.	Is a great grain for a salad and also works well as a porridge	Protein, fiber, iron and various vitamins and minerals
<b>Bulgar</b>	Wheat based. Often used in traditional tabbouleh salads. It has a sweet flavor compared to other grains	Works well in grain-based salads, and as a base for stuffing mushrooms, tomatoes or peppers	Fiber, magnesium, Vitamin-B6.
<b>Farro</b>	Wheat based. Chewy, hearty grain	Excellent in soup, stew or chili. Use instead of pasta or rice in your favorite recipes.	Protein, fiber, B-Vitamins and minerals
<b>Freekeh</b>	Wheat based, so not a gluten free grain. Freekeh has a nutty flavor.	Is a great grain for salads and pilaf and also a great stand-alone side-dish mixed with fresh herbs.	Iron, protein and calcium
<b>Quinoa</b>	Gluten free, nutty grain. Cooks more quickly than other grains.	Very versatile. Use for a breakfast cereal, in soups, salads, tabbouleh or as a base for stuffing	Protein, B Vitamins, Minerals, Fiber and amino acids

