

Whole Grains For Your Whole Life Essential For Good Health And Disease Prevention



by James Hill, Ph.D.

(NAPSA)—Most of us know that whole grains are good for us, yet most Americans eat just one of the three recommended servings of whole grains each day—in fact, almost half of Americans eat no whole grains at all. Why? Perhaps the simple fact that they are considered “healthy” leads consumers to believe that whole grains won’t taste good. However, whole grains, of which there are a wide variety, can taste delicious and are easy to incorporate into your diet.

Whole grains include barley, brown rice, bulgur, cracked wheat, millet, oatmeal, popcorn, whole corn, sorghum, spelt, whole rye, wild rice and whole wheat and flours from these components. Other pseudo-grains, such as buckwheat, amaranth and quinoa are also accepted as whole grains.

What makes whole grains healthy? Many Americans are increasingly aware that fruits and vegetables contain fiber and disease-fighting antioxidants and phytochemicals but may not realize that whole grains are also an important source of fiber and other nutrients—including B vitamins, vitamin E, magnesium and iron. In fact, whole grains as part of a healthy diet may reduce risks of heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and obesity. Few foods can offer such diverse benefits. “And with so many sources of whole grains, adding them throughout your day is an easy—and delicious—way to improve your health,” says Colleen Doyle, MS, RD, Director of Nutrition and Physical Activity for the American Cancer Society.

Experts believe that the fiber in whole grains may help to prevent plaque buildup in the arter-

ies, thus protecting against heart disease and stroke. And your body also digests whole grains slowly, so levels of blood sugar stay steady, which aids diabetics. And there’s a weight-loss benefit: People who consume more whole grains consistently weigh less than those who consume fewer whole grain products.

Fortunately, there are easy ways to add whole grains to your diet to get the recommended three or more servings of whole grains every day (or half of the recommended 6 to 8 servings of grains—servings as whole). For example, if you have a half cup cooked or three-quarters cup dry whole grain cereal and a sandwich with two slices of whole wheat bread, you’ve had three servings. You can also get the whole grains you need from foods made with a mix of whole and enriched grains—which means you have plenty of delicious choices that match your taste preferences.

Here are easy and delicious recipes to help you get the daily recommendation of whole grains into your diet:

Quick Cheese Danish (Serves 1)

Ingredients:

- 2 slices whole grain bread, crusts removed
- 2 tablespoons ricotta cheese
- 2 tablespoons light cream cheese
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375° F. Roll out bread with a rolling pin until flattened to about ½ in. Stir together both cheeses, sugar and cinnamon until smooth. Brush some of

the butter on the edges of the bread. Mound one-half of the cheese mixture just right of center in the middle of each piece of bread. Fold over the bread to form a triangle and enclose the filling. Pinch the edges of the bread firmly together to form a seal. Arrange in one layer on a small baking sheet and brush the top of each turnover with the remaining butter. Bake the turnovers in the middle of the oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until pale golden.

Developed by Sara Moulton for the Grain Foods Foundation.

Turkey, Sharp Cheddar, Dijon, Mayo and Red Leaf Lettuce on Whole Grain (Makes 4 sandwiches)

Ingredients:

- 1 pound roasted turkey breast (cold cuts)
- ½ pound sliced sharp cheddar cheese
- ¾ cup mayo
- ¾ cup Dijon mustard
- 1 large head of red leaf lettuce, washed and dried
- 8 slices whole grain sliced bread

Directions:

Toast bread, spread with mayo and mustard, and add sliced cheese, lettuce and turkey. Toast in a panini press or serve at room temperature.

Developed by Dave Lieberman on behalf of the Grain Foods Foundation.

For additional recipes, and information, go to www.grainpower.org.

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