

# A balanced higher protein diet

For weight loss

## FACT SHEET

**Four serves of whole grain and high fibre grain foods each day is an essential part of a higher protein weight loss diet.**

### Grains for weight loss

Is your goal weight loss? Choosing the right grain foods in a balanced weight loss diet is the key to short-term results and long-term success.

As a guide, while following a higher protein weight loss diet we recommend you eat **4 serves of whole grain or high fibre grain foods every day** and here's why:

- **Nutrition Powerhouse** – Whole grains are nutrient dense, containing more than 26 nutrients and phytonutrients (health protective components like antioxidants) which nourish the body and promote wellbeing.<sup>1</sup> As well as being packed with nutrition eating more whole grains has been linked with having lower body fat.<sup>2</sup>
- **Low GI benefit** – Eating a variety of whole grains lowers the overall glycemic index (GI) of your diet which helps to keep you fuller for longer.<sup>3</sup>
- **Fibre Boost** – Grains are Australia's leading source of fibre and research shows that fibre from grains is more effective than fibre from fruit and vegetables at preventing weight gain.<sup>4</sup>

### Grains are a key part of a higher protein diet

To lose weight and keep it off, choosing a diet that is balanced and satisfies your hunger is important. Research shows that protein rich foods help you feel satisfied and are important for maintaining muscle mass.<sup>5-7</sup> These two features help explain why higher protein diets can help some people lose weight.

What many people don't realise is that, unlike 'fad' diets, an effective and sustainable higher protein weight loss diet actually includes moderate amounts of whole grains and high fibre grain foods every day. But how much?

A recent study of young Australian women supports the benefits of a balanced higher protein diet for weight loss. Women in this study followed an energy restricted higher protein diet which included **4 serves of grain foods like bread and breakfast cereal each day**. At six months, women who sustained the weight loss diet were able to achieve over around 9kg weight loss, and they were able to keep the weight off over the full 12 months.<sup>8</sup>

### Did you know?



People who eat more whole grains and high fibre grain foods weigh less, have smaller waist circumferences and are less likely to gain weight in the long term.<sup>3,4,9</sup>

*No one diet fits all: if a higher protein weight loss diet suits your weight loss journey aim to include 4 serves of whole grain and high fibre grain foods in your eating plan each day.*



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## Smart choices for a healthy weight

Put simply, weight gain occurs when we eat more energy (kilojoules) than we use up through exercise or activity. So, any change in eating habits that includes eating less total energy together with exercise can help people lose weight. This includes higher protein diets as well as lower fat diets. Over the long-term all these diets are equally effective.<sup>10</sup>

Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight in the long-term requires a commitment to an active lifestyle and a balanced diet. Unfortunately many Australians are vulnerable to the lure of quick fix diets and weight loss products that promise rapid results but deliver an unbalanced and unsustainable diet. Including whole grain and high fibre grain foods in your meals is often the difference between a low carbohydrate 'fad' diet and a healthy, balanced eating pattern that you can maintain for years to come.

## Variety with Grains

Not all whole grains are high fibre and not all high fibre grain foods are whole grains. By choosing a variety of whole grains and including high fibre grain foods in your weight loss diet you will obtain the low GI benefits, achieve adequate fibre intake and nourish your body with a range of nutrients.

## Whole grain

Whole grains and whole grain foods contain all the essential parts and nutrients of the original grain seed. Did you know that wholemeal bread is whole grain? Even though you can't see the grains all the essential parts of the grain are still there.

## High Fibre

Fibre is important for everyone, but it's not as easy to find as you might think.

**Without grain foods you would have to eat around 1.1kg or 9 serves of vegetables and 3 serves of fruit** each day to obtain 25g of fibre, the minimum daily amount of fibre recommended for women.<sup>11</sup> Choose high fibre grain foods, they contain at least 4g of fibre per serve.

To maximise the benefits of fibre drink plenty of water and exercise regularly.



## What does one serve look like?

- 1 slice of whole grain, wholemeal or high fibre bread
- ½ a medium wholemeal roll or flat bread (40g)
- 1 wholemeal English muffin or crumpet
- ½ cup cooked brown rice, whole grain couscous, wholemeal pasta or noodles
- ½ cup cooked oats, wheat, barley, rye, bulgur, millet, buckwheat or quinoa
- ⅓ cup (30g) whole grain or high fibre breakfast cereal
- 2 whole grain biscuit breakfast cereals
- ½ cup porridge or ¼ cup muesli
- 3 whole grain or high fibre crispbreads

## Including 4 serves is easy

### BREAKFAST (1 SERVE)

- ⅓ cup (30g) high fibre breakfast cereal, low fat milk topped with sliced fresh fruit

### LUNCH (2 SERVES)

- Sandwich with 2 slices of whole grain bread, a serve of fish/ham/chicken/roast beef, a slice of reduced fat cheese and plenty of salad filling i.e. lettuce, tomato, carrot, beetroot, cucumber
- 1 serve of fruit i.e. an apple

### SNACK

- Small handful (30g) of unsalted nuts

### DINNER (1 SERVE)

- Beef Stir Fry using 200g (raw weight) lean beef, plenty of vegetables with ½ cup cooked brown rice

### SNACK

- ¾ cup low fat frozen yoghurt

## Meal & Snack Ideas

For more meal and snack ideas mix and match these options using the appropriate serve sizes to achieve 4 serves a day on a higher protein weight loss diet.

### MEAL IDEAS

- Brown rice or wholemeal pasta salad
- Mini pizza on wholemeal/mixed grain English muffins or pita bread
- Soup with whole grain croutons, wholemeal pasta or barley
- Salads made with grains like brown rice, cracked wheat (bulgur) or legumes
- Sandwich made with whole grain, wholemeal or mixed grain bread
- Side dishes: whole grain couscous, brown rice or quinoa

### SNACKS

- Whole grain and/or high fibre crispbreads/rice cakes/crackers with dip
- Popcorn (30g plain or lightly salted is best)



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