

Whole grain foods

A hallmark of a healthy diet

FACT SHEET

Nature's nutrition package

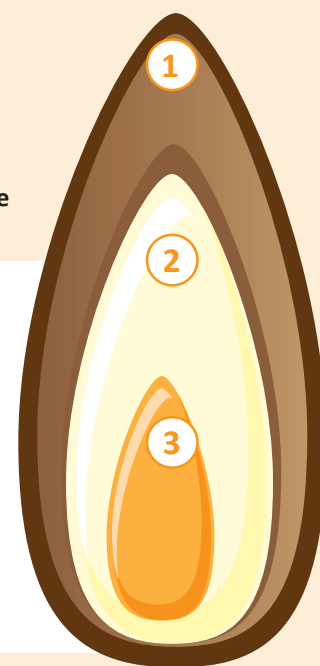
A whole grain is a type of seed and contains all of the essential nutrients to sprout and grow into a plant.

Whole grains are made up of 3 parts. Together they deliver over 26 nutrients and other active substances which nourish the body and help to reduce risk of disease.⁸

1. BRAN: The bran is the outer layer and is dense in fibres which protect the whole grain. *CONTAINS: soluble fibre, insoluble fibre & resistant starch/protein/minerals – magnesium, zinc, selenium, iron, copper/vitamins – B vitamins, vitamin E/phytonutrients*

2. ENDOSPERM: The endosperm provides essential energy and nutrients to support the growth of the seed and young plant. *CONTAINS: carbohydrates/soluble fibre/protein/vitamins – thiamin (B1) & vitamin E/minerals – selenium*

3. GERM: The germ is the embryo which sprouts into a new plant and delivers essential nourishment. *CONTAINS: soluble fibre, insoluble fibre & resistant starch/healthy oils/proteins/vitamins – B vitamins & vitamin E/phytonutrients*



Why eat whole grains?

Whole grains tick all of the boxes of good quality carbohydrate foods⁸. They are:

- Nutrients dense; delivering vitamins, minerals, trace elements, proteins and carbohydrate for energy
- Rich in a range of dietary fibres
- A source of protective phytonutrients
- Naturally low in saturated fat and salt

In addition, enjoying a variety of whole grain foods can help to lower the overall glycemic index (GI) of your diet.⁹

The health benefits of whole grains

With an impressive nutrition profile it is no wonder whole grains are recommended as part of healthy diets around the world. The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend we eat a variety of grain foods each day choosing mostly whole grain and/or high fibre varieties.¹

This emphasis on whole grain and high fibre grain foods is based on the scientific evidence⁹⁻¹³ that people who eat grain foods, particularly whole grains are 20-30% less likely to:

1. Gain weight
2. Have heart disease
3. Develop type 2 diabetes
4. Suffer from bowel cancer

Did you know?

People who choose whole grain foods more often weigh less and gain less weight over time.^{9,13}



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Types of whole grains

Whole grains include wheat, rice, oats, corn (maize), rye, barley and triticale.

Recently more and more people are also trying 'ancient' whole grains such as millet, sorghum, teff, freekah as well as varieties of wheat such as kamut, einkorn and farro (emmer).

'Pseudo-grains' amaranth, buckwheat and quinoa are whole grains too. While they technically belong to a different family of plants they contain a similar whole package of nutrients and are enjoyed in the same way as other whole grains.

Whole grain foods

Whole grain foods are made from milled whole grains as well as intact, cracked, flaked or puffed grains. They include whole grain or wholemeal breads, multigrain breads, whole grain breakfast cereals, whole grain crispbreads, wholemeal pasta and wholemeal couscous. Look out for words such as 'whole', 'whole meal', 'mixed grain', 'cracked', 'flaked', 'kibbled' or 'puffed' next to the name of the grain in the ingredient list.



Australians are not consuming enough whole grain

A national survey in 2014 found 75% of Australians are not getting enough whole grains in their diet.²

To meet the whole grain Daily Target Intake all Australians should aim to enjoy grain foods 3-4 times each day, choosing at least half as whole grain or high fibre grain foods.

Not all whole grain foods are the same.

Whole grain foods like bread and breakfast cereal contain between 1.5 grams and 70 grams of whole grain per serve,¹⁴ so it can be hard to identify foods higher in whole grain.

Choose Foods Higher in Whole Grain

A clear and simple way to identify and choose better whole grain foods is to look for products which state:

- "Contains whole grain"
- "High in whole grain"
- "Very high in whole grain" – the highest level of whole grain

Look for the whole grain Daily Target Intake statement – the higher the percentage the better. i.e. 'One 45g serve of Sunrise cereal contributes 70% towards the GLNC 48g whole grain Daily Target Intake'

Making healthy choices easy

Healthier food choices that are high in whole grain or very high in whole grain, may also be certified by the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council. To identify these healthy foods simply look for the GLNC certification on pack.



Foods with this certification on-pack are high in whole grain or very high in whole grain and are recommended within a balanced diet.

To find out if your favourite brands or products are using these messages or are certified by the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council, visit www.glnc.org.au

Which foods are a better quality choice of whole grain?

Here is a guide on the types of healthy whole grain foods which are high in whole grain or very high in whole grain. Choosing these foods more often is an easy way to boost your whole grain intake:



| Whole grain food | High in whole grain | Very high in whole grain |
|--|---|---|
| Breads | Wholemeal or whole grain wraps Wholemeal crumpet | Wholemeal bread Wholemeal flat bread or pita bread Wholemeal English muffin |
| Breakfast cereals | Some flaked breakfast cereals | Rolled oats / plain porridge Muesli with added fruit and/or nuts Whole grain breakfast biscuits Some flaked whole grain cereal with added fruit/nuts |
| Crispbreads | Whole grain wheat crispbreads Plain rice cakes | Whole grain wheat lunch slice crispbreads |
| Grain products | | Wholemeal pasta Wholemeal couscous Soba noodles |
| Snack | | Plain popcorn |
| Intact, cracked, flaked or kibbled whole grains | | Brown rice Quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat, bulgur, freekeh, cracked wheat, rye, black rice or red rice |



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Visit www.glnc.org.au to download recipes, fact sheets and subscribe to GLNC's e-newsletter to learn more about the benefits of grains and legumes. | For all references cited go to www.glnc.org.au/resources/fact-sheet-references.

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