



MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW RESEARCH: A SIMPLE DIET SWAP HELPS RISK OF BOWEL CANCER AND COULD SAVE MILLIONS

New Australian research has found a simple swap to whole grain foods could significantly reduce the nation's healthcare expenditure for bowel cancer with a \$37.2 million annual saving, a result of a 17% reduction in the disease.

Bowel cancer is one of the most common cancers globally, with rates in Australia higher than anywhere else in the world; one in 13 Australians will develop the disease - with one in 10 under 50 years of age, according to Bowel Cancer Australia.

The new research, from investigators at the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council (GLNC) and an expert from Kuwait University was published today in the international journal *Nutrients* and found that the swap to whole grain would cut over \$37 million from Australia's annual healthcare budget.

"More than half of bowel cancer cases in Australia may be attributable to modifiable risk factors, including diet," Dr Sara Grafenauer, General Manager of GLNC said.

Long considered a disease affecting older generations, researcher, Dr Grafenauer said data indicates a "concerning" increase in bowel cancer in Australians aged under 40 in the past 20 years.

"Currently, the main focus for bowel cancer is on screening those over 50 years of age," she said.

"But as Australia is number one globally in terms of bowel cancer, and younger people are increasingly being diagnosed, looking more to prevention through diet makes sense."

Most Australian adults currently consume just 21g or less than 1.5 serves of whole grain a day – less than half of the recommended 48g or three serves a day, which only 27% of adults meet. Adolescents, on average, consume just 8.7g of whole grains a day, less than a fifth of the recommended daily intake.

"It's widely known that adolescent dietary patterns follow into adulthood, and poor habits may further predispose younger adults to earlier disease onset in the future," Dr Grafenauer said.



“By focusing on whole grain breakfast cereal and wholemeal bread – the two main sources of whole grain for Australians – the whole grain target of 48g could be achieved with minimal change to regular eating habits.”.

“A simple swap to a whole grain option could have a powerful impact on individual health, as well as the Australian economy.

A range of resources are available to help encourage the swap to whole grain, including an [e-Book](#) with easy-to-make whole grain recipes and a [searchable whole grain product database](#).

Ends

Media resources

- The research paper is available online via [Nutrients journal](#)
- Available via [Dropbox link](#):
 - PDF copy of the research paper from *Nutrients*
 - Photo of Dr Sara Grafenauer
 - Photos of easy whole grain food options

For more information, images or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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About the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council (GLNC)

As the independent authority on the nutrition and health benefits of grains and legumes, GLNCs mission is to promote grains and legumes nutrition as part of a balanced diet through evidence-based information. Visit the [GLNC website](#) for recipes, factsheets and up-to-date information on the latest evidence around grains and legumes, and connect with GLNC on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram via [@GrainsLegumesNC](#).