

# Health Promotion in Motion



## Whole Grains

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that at least half of your daily grain choices are whole grains. Whole grains are delicious and help keep you healthy. Because they are high in fiber, they help you feel full after a meal – and that helps manage weight. Visit <http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/grains.html> to find the amount of grains recommended for you. Learn about grain portions at [http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/grains\\_amount.aspx#](http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/grains_amount.aspx#).

### Health Benefits

Eating more whole grains can help you reduce your risk for:

- Overweight
- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Cancer
- Stroke
- Constipation

### A Food's Color Does Not Tell You If It Has Whole Grains

- Dark or brown bread may be a whole grain but it may also just have molasses or caramel food coloring – or cocoa. Cocoa is used to darken pumpernickel bread.
- The opposite is also true. Whole grain foods may be light in color such as those made from oats or white wheat.



### Check the Ingredient List on Grain Products

Because color can be misleading, it's important to check the ingredient list on grain products. When looking at ingredient lists for bread, pasta, couscous, pancake mixes, and other grain products, look for **whole grains at the top of the list** – such as:

- Whole wheat (bread, pasta, couscous, etc.)
- Brown rice
- Buckwheat
- Wild rice
- Millet
- Quinoa (kin-waa)
- Bulgur (cracked wheat)
- Triticale (tri-ti-kay-lee)
- Whole-grain barley
- Whole-grain corn
- Popcorn (see below)
- Whole oats/oatmeal
- Whole rye

Beware of labels that claim “made with *wheat* flour.” It may be an advertising gimmick, since even highly processed “white” flour is made from wheat flour. Instead, buy products made with whole wheat flour.



### Popcorn Is a Whole Grain

- Fat and salt are often added to popcorn. Try air popping your popcorn to avoid these extras and go light on the salt.
- If you buy microwave popcorn, look for a lower-fat variety. Consider the snack-size bag to help control the portion size.

## Tips to Eat More Whole Grains



- Start your day with a whole grain **breakfast** cereal that's low in added sugar. For extra fiber, top it with fresh or frozen fruit or berries.
- Whole wheat **pancakes** topped with berries or sliced fruit make a special weekend brunch or quick dinner.
- For **dinner**, try whole wheat pasta or brown rice.



- Make **sandwiches** with whole grain bread.
- When you need a quick **side dish**, consider whole wheat couscous. It's tiny pasta that's smaller than a grain of rice. Look for it in the health food section of your grocery store or at your local health food store. See recipe below.
- **Snack** on popcorn, whole grain cereal bars, low fat whole grain crackers, baked tortilla chips, a brown rice cake, or a bowl of whole grain cereal.
- Add whole grain barley, wild rice, or brown rice to your favorite **soup, stew, or casserole**.
- Use whole grain **bread, tortillas, bagels, pita pockets, and rolls**. Try whole grain **muffins** or **cornbread** made with whole grain corn meal.
- **When baking**, add oats to cookies and cobblers. Substitute whole grain flour for one-fourth to one-half of the white flour in recipes.

### Basic Quinoa

See the two boxes below for more quinoa cooking tips.

Serves 4

Recipe from <http://www.foodfit.com>  
5 min Prep Time, 20 min Cook Time

1 cup quinoa  
2 cups water or stock  
1 tablespoon (or less) olive oil  
Salt and pepper to taste

- Using a wire-mesh strainer, rinse the quinoa under cold water.
- Bring water or stock to a boil in saucepan.
- Add quinoa. Cover. Reduce heat to medium low. Simmer 15-20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed and you can see the quinoa's spiral "tails".
- Fluff with a fork. Toss with olive oil (optional) salt, and pepper.

#### Nutrition Facts per serving

190 calories; 6g fat; 1g saturated fat; 0mg cholesterol; 300mg sodium; 29g carbohydrate; 3g dietary fiber; 6g protein.

### Whole Wheat Couscous

Couscous is very tiny pasta that cooks in less than 15 minutes! It goes well with stewed entrées because it can soak up the sauce.

Serves 3

10-15 min Cook Time

1½ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or water  
1 cup whole wheat couscous

- In a medium saucepan, bring broth or water to a boil.
- Stir in couscous. Cover and removed from heat.
- Let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork and serve.

#### Nutrition Facts per serving (1/3 cup dried whole wheat couscous)

220 calories; 1g fat; 0g saturated fat; 0mg cholesterol; 5mg sodium; 44g carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 8g protein.

#### Add two or three of these to your cooked whole grains

Thawed frozen peas; dried apricots; chopped broccoli; red and green peppers; apple; celery; onion; garlic; canned beans; your favorite herbs or spices.

#### Make a Whole Grain Salad

- Start with 1 cup of cooked quinoa or whole wheat couscous, and add:
  - 2 cups of your favorite raw or cooked veggies such as zucchini, pepper, tomato, broccoli, onion, garlic, sweet potato, cucumber, cauliflower, mushrooms
  - 1 can of drained chickpeas or kidney beans
- Toss with 1-2 tablespoons of your favorite salad dressing or a splash of olive oil and lemon juice. Season with your favorite herbs, salt and pepper.