

# Eat more whole grains

As you try to stretch your food dollar, you may be tempted to buy cheaper refined grains.

These refined grains are found in foods like white bread, white flour, white rice, white pasta and highly processed snack foods. However, you should strive to eat more whole grains to fuel the body, but you have to realise that not all carbohydrates are created equal. Whole grains are better than refined grains because they contain fibre which helps slow down digestion, stabilise blood-sugar levels, and ward off hunger and cravings. If you are diabetic and want to reduce your insulin levels, you should be eating whole grains. Why Whole Grains? Whole grains are unprocessed and have the whole kernels of grains, both the inside part of the grain and the outer covering called the husk. Very often, the healthy bran and germ have been removed during processing to increase a product's shelf life, so you end up with a refined product which is less nutritious and easily digested. As a result, you may experience rapid swings in blood-sugar levels and experience cravings for more refined carbohydrates, as well as being constantly hungry. Making choices

Your diet should include high-fibre cereal, accompanied by low-fat protein. Eat a variety of whole grains to help keep your cravings under control. Labels of products can indicate what healthy choices you are making. When buying wholegrain pastas, breads, and other products, the label should read 100 per cent wholewheat, 100 per cent whole oats, or 100 per cent whole rye. Be careful if the label uses general words like wholewheat, multigrain, 3-grain, 10-grain, or 100 per cent wheat. The product may not be truly whole grain. Avoid products that have labels with the words enriched wheat, enriched white flour, flour, or unbleached flour because they are most likely to be made with refined flour. Make sure that the product contains no more than three grams of sugar per serving, has at least three grams of fibre per serving, and contains no trans-fats. Double check the claims on the front of the package. Some food manufacturers state 'made with whole grains', but you will discover that the product contains a lot of refined flour when you read the fine prints.

Wholegrain foods Most white flour is enriched with some vitamins and minerals, but does not have the fibre of whole wheat or other whole grain flours. Besides, breads, cereals and pastas, whole grains like oats, and wild rice should give you at least three servings of whole grains every day. Worldwide, food manufacturers are also using more whole grains in regular cereals for children and using forms of wholegrain flour that are very similar to white bread in texture and flavour. Healthy bowels Whole grains provide fibre which contributes to healthy bowels. Everyone's bowel movements are unique, and what is normal for one person may not be for another. However, if you are experiencing symptoms of constipation, like having difficulty passing dry and hard stools and not having a bowel movement for more than three days, you should definitely eat more fibre. You should also resist eating fewer low-fibre foods like ice cream, dairy products, processed and sugary foods like sodas and candy. Drinking more water will lead to increased bulk in the intestine when the right amount of fibre is eaten. Do not rely on laxatives for healthy bowel movements. Instead, an adequate intake of fibre will do a good job. Pay special attention to ensure that you have adequate amounts of fibre in your diet found in grains, fruits and vegetables. Oatmeal Smoothie 1 cup apple juice 1 frozen banana 3 heaped tablespoons of uncooked oatmeal 3 tbsp honey Additional fruit if desired Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Serves 1. Source: Foodandwhine.com