

Wondering About Whole Grains?

What is a Whole Grain?

A whole grain consists of the entire grain seed of a plant. This seed, also known as the kernel, is made up of three key parts: the bran, the germ, and the endosperm. Refining typically removes the bran and the germ, leaving only the endosperm. Without the bran and germ, about 25% of the grain's protein is lost, along with at least seventeen key nutrients. Refined products still contribute valuable nutrients because processors add back some vitamins and minerals to enrich refined grains. But whole grains still provide more protein, more fiber, and many other important vitamins and minerals.



Whole grains can be eaten whole, cracked, split, flaked, or ground.

Most often they are milled into flour and used to make breads, cereals, pasta, crackers, and other grain-based foods.

How to Tell if It's a Whole Grain?

Some foods that seem to be whole grains may not be, it's important to know what to look for. Here are some tips that work...

A. The item must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- Product ingredient list must indicate whole grain as the first ingredient, with the exception of water (by law, ingredients must be listed in order by weight, starting with the heaviest ingredient).

OR

- Whole grains per serving must be ≥ 8 grams.

OR

- Product includes FDA's whole grain health claim on its packaging.

"Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers."

10 Tips for Preschoolers – Build Healthy Mealtime Habits

1 PLAN MEALS AND SNACKS

Make time for three meals and one or two snacks every day. Offer choices from each food group—fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and protein foods—throughout the day so your preschooler gets the nutrition he or she needs.

2 MAKE MEAL ENJOYABLE

Eat meals with your children whenever possible. Let them help you prepare the meal. Make conversation about something that made them laugh. Keep mealtime upbeat and stress free.

3 TRY TO GET TWO FOOD GROUPS IN A SNACK

Pair sliced tomato with low-fat cheese and add nut butter to a 100% whole-wheat mini bagel.

4 KEEP THINGS POSITIVE

Talk about the color, feel, or flavors of foods so they sound appealing to your preschooler. Discourage others from making negative comments about food during meals.

5 DEVELOP TASTE BUDS

When preschoolers develop a taste for many foods, it's easier to plan meals. Keep in mind that it may take a dozen tries for a child to accept a new food.

6 VISIT THE MARKET

Shopping can teach your preschooler about food and healthy eating—talk about where foods come from and how they grow.

...10 tips continued on page 7