

10 tips Nutrition Education Series



Based on the
Dietary
Guidelines
for Americans

Choosing whole-grain foods

Whole grains are important sources of nutrients such as zinc, magnesium, B vitamins, and fiber. There are many choices available to make half your grains whole grains. But whole-grain foods should be handled with care. Over time and if not properly stored, oils in whole grains can cause spoilage. Consider these tips to select whole-grain products and keep them fresh to eat.

Whole grains can be an easy choice when preparing meals. Choose wholegrain breads, breakfast cereals, and pastas. Look at the Nutrition Facts labels and ingredients lists to find choices lower in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.



Look for the word "whole" at the beginning of the ingredients list
Some whole-grain ingredients include whole oats, whole-wheat flour, whole-grain corn, whole-grain brown rice, and whole rye. Foods that say "multi-grain," "100% wheat," "high fiber," or are brown in color may not be a whole-grain product.

Choose whole grains at school Prepare meals and snacks with whole grains at home so your kids are more likely to choose whole-grain foods at school.



Find the fiber on label

If the product provides at least 3 grams of fiber per serving, it is a good source of fiber. If it contains 5 or more grams of fiber per serving, it is an excellent source of fiber.

Is gluten in whole grains?

People who can't eat wheat gluten can eat whole grains if they choose carefully. There are many whole-grain products, such as buckwheat, certified gluten-free oats or oatmeal, popcorn, brown rice, wild rice, and quinoa that fit gluten-free diet needs.

Check for freshness

Buy whole-grain products that ar

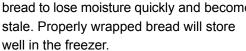
Buy whole-grain products that are tightly packaged and well sealed. Grains should always look and smell fresh. Also, check the expiration date and storage guidelines on the package.

Keep a lid on it
When storing whole grains from bulk
bins, use containers with tight-fitting
lids and keep in a cool, dry location. A sealed
container is important for maintaining
freshness and reducing bug infestations.



Buy what you need
Purchase smaller quantities of whole-grain products to reduce spoilage. Most grains in sealed packaging can be kept in the freezer.

Wrap it up
Whole-grain bread is best stored at room temperature in its original packaging, tightly closed with a quicklock or twist tie. The refrigerator will cause bread to lose moisture quickly and become





What's the shelf life?
Since the oil in various whole-grain flours differs, the shelf life varies too. Most whole-grain flours keep well in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 months and in the freezer for 6 to 8 months. Cooked brown rice can be refrigerated 3 to 5 days and can be frozen up to 6 months.