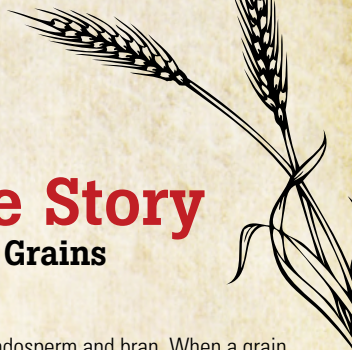




The Whole Story

Nutrition of Whole Grains



WHAT ARE WHOLE GRAINS?

Whole grains contain all three parts of the grain: the germ, endosperm and bran. When a grain is refined during the milling process, two of these parts are removed - the nutrient-dense bran and germ - taking much of the grain's nutritional value with them. Some common whole grains include oats, wheat, barley and rye.

THE FIBER-CHOLESTEROL CONNECTION

3g of soluble fiber daily from whole grains such as oatmeal, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease.

- Insoluble fiber (the type that does not dissolve in water and is found in wheat bran, oats, vegetables and fruit skins) helps promote bowel regularity.
- Soluble fiber (the type that dissolves in water, found in oat bran, oatmeal, beans, citrus fruits and strawberries) helps lower blood cholesterol levels.
- Cholesterol is both found in foods we eat (animal sources) and produced by the liver. Although cholesterol is necessary for production of certain hormones and digestion of fat, most people should aim for levels below 200mg/dL. High cholesterol (200mg/dL and above) can eventually damage and clog arteries.
- Beta glucan, the soluble fiber in oats, works like a sponge in the digestive tract to soak up or bind LDL, or "bad," cholesterol. It is then naturally removed from the body as waste.

THE GOODNESS OF WHOLE GRAINS

- Studies show that eating whole grains in place of refined grains helps to lower the risk of many chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease.
- Since whole grains are high in complex carbohydrates and fiber, they help promote a feeling of fullness, which may help to maintain body weight.
- Whole grain foods can also help keep you regular and promote a healthy digestive system. The insoluble fiber in whole grains helps increase stool weight and decreases the amount of time it takes for it to pass through your intestines. This helps promote regularity.

HOW DO I KNOW IT'S "WHOLE-GRAIN"?

- Just because a grain is dark in color does not necessarily mean it is a whole grain. Look for the statement "100% Whole Grain" and whole grain ingredients to be named first in the ingredient list to help distinguish whole grain products.
- The Whole Grains Council has also created packaging stamps to help you identify whole grains—the 100% stamp ensures that one serving of the product contains at least a full serving of whole grains.