



Protein? In Grains? Yes!

Some people think the only advantage of whole grains is their higher content of fiber. But did you know that most whole grains are a good source of protein, too?

Oh sure, you say. I've heard that quinoa is some kind of superfood, high in protein. I wasn't sure whether to believe it though, because aren't grains just basically carbohydrates?

Most foods, it turns out, contain a mix of the three macronutrients: fat, protein and carbohydrate, and that's true of grains, too. Whole grains not only have more fiber than refined grains, they also contain more protein.

Here's how much protein there is in different popular whole grains, when you eat them as a side dish:

Name of grain *	Amount of protein
Amaranth	6.10 grams
Barley, hulled	5.62 grams
Brown rice	3.38 grams
Buckwheat	5.96 grams
Kamut® Khorasan wheat	6.54 grams
Millet	4.96 grams
Oats, rolled	5.92 grams
Quinoa	6.35 grams
Rye	4.65 grams
Sorghum	5.09 grams
Spelt	6.56 grams
Wheat	6.93 grams
Wheat, bulgur	5.53 grams
Wild rice	6.63 grams

* all values based on 45g uncooked grain – a standard FDA serving size.

And here's what you get from eating whole grain pasta, or the bread in a sandwich:

Name of food	Amount of protein
Whole wheat pasta, 2 ounces dry	8.34 grams
Whole wheat bread, 2 slices	7.97 grams
Whole wheat pita, 6.5" round	6.27 grams

On average, people need about 50 grams of protein a day, so at about 6 grams of protein, most whole grain choices provide about 12% of your daily needs.

How does this compare to other protein choices? Six grams of protein is the same amount found in one hard-boiled egg, an ounce of almonds, or two-thirds of a cup of lentil soup, all of which most of us readily recognize as full of protein.

So when you're looking for delicious ways to enjoy protein, remember whole grains!