

Build a Healthy Plate With Whole Grains



Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or cereal grain is a grain product. Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits are examples of grain-rich products. Grains are divided into two groups: **whole grains** and **refined grains**. Whenever possible, whole-grain versions of these grain products should be offered. Most children 2 years and older do not consume enough whole grains or other foods rich in dietary fiber. You can help by providing children with a variety of whole grains during the week. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends making at least half your grains *whole* grains.

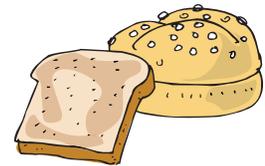
Increase the amount of *whole* grains in children’s diets by purchasing, preparing, and serving foods that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient in the ingredient list. Including whole-grain foods in meals and as snacks can:

- Give children the B vitamins and minerals they need for energy to play and learn.
- Promote proper digestion and make children’s “potty time” easier by providing dietary fiber.
- Help them feel full longer and maintain a healthy weight as they grow.
- Add texture and flavor to their plate.



What types of grains should I offer?

| Instead Of: | Choose Whole Grains: |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| White rice | Brown rice, wild rice, quinoa |
| White flour | Whole-wheat flour |
| White bread or wheat bread | 100% Whole-grain bread |
| Noodles, pasta, spaghetti, macaroni | Whole-wheat pasta or whole-grain noodles |
| Flour tortillas | Whole-grain tortillas and whole-corn tortillas |
| Crackers | Whole-grain crackers |
| Degermed cornmeal | Whole-grain cornmeal |



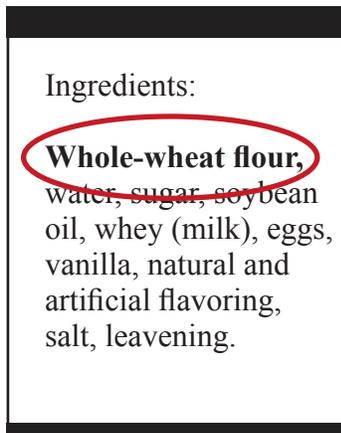
more 'types of grains tips' on next page ...



... more 'types of grains tips'

It can be difficult to know if you are choosing whole grains by reading statements on the packages alone. Some claims may sound good, but do not always mean that the product is a whole grain. Here are some tips in selecting whole-grain foods:

Read the Label



- ▶ **Take a look at the ingredient list.** Choose products that name a whole-grain ingredient first on the list, or second after water—that means there is more of it than the other ingredients.

Look for “whole wheat,” “brown rice,” “oatmeal,” “bulgur,” “buckwheat,” “whole corn,” “whole-grain cornmeal,” “whole oats,” “whole rye,” or “wild rice.”

For foods made of multiple grains, make sure the whole-grain ingredients appear near the beginning of the ingredient list.

- ▶ **Use the Nutrition Facts label to check the fiber content of whole-grain foods.** Choose those higher in dietary fiber. Good sources of fiber contain 10% to 19% of the Daily Value; excellent sources contain 20% or more. http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/Nibbles/Nibbles_Newsletter_3.pdf

Consider Offering These Whole Grains

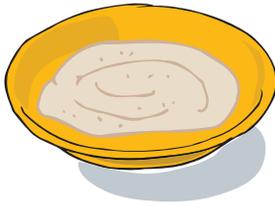
- ▶ **Vary the choices for whole grains.** Rolled oats, oatmeal, brown rice, wild rice, buckwheat, quinoa, wheat berries, and millet are naturally whole-grain foods. Providing different choices each day helps children get the nutrition they need and introduces them to new foods. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains.html>
- ▶ **100% whole-grain foods**, including “100% whole-grain” breads, breakfast cereals, pasta, and whole-corn tortillas, are also good choices.
- ▶ **Serve whole-grain versions of cereal, bread, tortillas, or pancakes at breakfast.** Top them with unsweetened applesauce or fresh or frozen fruit instead of sugar, syrup, jam, jelly, or honey.



... more 'types of grains tips'

Limit Added Sugars and Solid Fats When Offering Whole-Grain Foods

- ▶ **Check the ingredient list of whole-grain-rich products for added sugars.** Look for sugar, honey, and ingredients ending in “-ose.” If present, make sure they are *not* one of the first three ingredients on the ingredient list. For a naturally sweet taste, try topping whole-grain foods with fresh, frozen, or canned fruit slices (canned in 100% fruit juice or water).
- ▶ **Be aware of solid fats in grain foods and toppings by reading the ingredient list.** Instead of butter, shortening, lard, and oils with the word “hydrogenated” in the ingredient list, choose those made from vegetable oils that are *not* hydrogenated. (See the Fats and Oils tip sheet on page 41 for more information.)
- ▶ **Choose toppings wisely for toast, hot cereals, pasta, noodles, and rice.** Instead of adding butter, stick margarine, lard, bacon, cream sauces, and regular, full-fat cheese, use vegetable oils, low-fat cheeses, marinara sauce, or steamed vegetables as toppings. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers/daily-food-plans/about-empty-calories.html>



TIP:

When serving oatmeal, use old-fashioned rolled oats. They do not contain as much sodium (salt), compared to instant oatmeal.

TIP:

The color of a grain or bread product is not an indication that it is a *whole-grain* food. Bread can be brown because of molasses or other added ingredients. Foods labeled as "multi-grain," "stone-ground," "100% wheat," "cracked wheat," "seven-grain," or "bran" are usually *not* whole-grain products, and might not contain *any* whole grain.



- **Keep in mind that popcorn, chips, hard pretzels, and rice cakes pose choking hazards.**
- **See Supplement A on page 77 for more information on choking hazards.**



- **Some children in your care may be allergic to wheat, soy, nuts, and seeds.**

Actively supervise children when serving meals and snacks. Handle food allergies on a case-by-case basis, have a medical statement on file, and contact your State agency or sponsoring organization if additional guidance is needed.

- **See Supplement B on page 81 for more information on food allergies.**



How can I encourage children to eat more whole grains?

If children are not used to eating whole grains often, introduce them gradually in combination with their favorite foods. Here are some ways to get children excited about whole grains:



- ▶ **Mix it up.** Try mixing whole- and non-whole-grain foods in your recipes and meals. Then, gradually increase the amount of whole grains each time you make them. For example, mix regular and whole-grain pasta or combine brown rice with white rice in a recipe or as a side dish. Or, start with ½ white and ½ whole-wheat-bread sandwiches, and eventually make both sides whole wheat.
- ▶ **Have a whole-grain taste-test.** Have children taste-test whole-grain and lower fat, sugar, and sodium versions of their favorite snacks, such as crackers, granola bars, soft pretzels, bagels, and dry cereals. Or, let children sample dishes that use whole grains as main ingredients, and have children Name That Grain!
- ▶ **Try some fun whole-grain activities and games.** Make art out of whole grains, and have older children identify foods made from whole grains. See “Grain Collage” from Team Nutrition’s Making Nutrition Count <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/graincollage.pdf> and “The Grain Game” from the Community Nutrition Action Kit. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/graingame.pdf>

Support the Message



- ▶ **Send the message home.** Breakfast is a good time to include whole grains, even on weekends and busy mornings. Share the *Nibbles for Health* take-home newsletter for parents on breakfast tips and ideas. http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/Nibbles/Nibbles_Newsletter_5.pdf
- ▶ **Enjoy whole grains and children will too.** They learn from watching you.

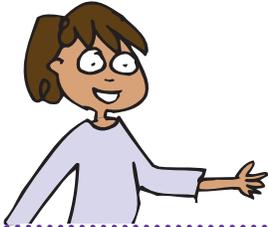


Activities

How can I put this information into practice?

Take a look at your current weekly or cycle menu. Circle the whole grains and whole-grain-rich foods on your child care menu.

Be sure to check the ingredient list. Whole-grain-rich foods are any bread or grain products that have a “whole” grain listed as the **first** grain ingredient in the ingredient list. Examples are *whole* wheat, *whole* oat, and *whole* corn.



Which new whole grains or whole-grain-rich foods listed will you try on your menu? Circle what you plan to try next month.

Amaranth
Brown rice
Buckwheat
Bulgur (cracked wheat)
Millet
Oatmeal
Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals:
 Whole-grain cereal flakes
 Muesli
Rolled oats
Quinoa
Sorghum
Triticale

Whole-grain barley
Whole-grain cornmeal
Whole-corn tortillas
Whole rye
Whole-wheat or whole-grain bread, pita, sandwich buns, and rolls
Whole-grain crackers
Whole-wheat pasta
Whole-grain noodles
Whole-grain tortillas
Wild rice

Other ideas: _____

How will you offer these whole grains or whole-grain-rich foods next month? As part of a:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sandwich (on whole-grain bread, pita, sandwich bun, or roll) <input type="checkbox"/> Corn Bread (made with whole-grain cornmeal) <input type="checkbox"/> Kangaroo Pocket (veggies and fillings in a whole-grain pita pocket) <input type="checkbox"/> Veggie Roll-Up (veggies wrapped in a whole-grain tortilla with ranch dressing) <input type="checkbox"/> Burrito or Quesadilla (using a whole-grain or whole-corn tortilla) <input type="checkbox"/> Stir-Fry (with brown rice) <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Pasta Meal (using whole-grain noodles) <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta Salad (using whole-wheat pasta) <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Rice Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Casserole (with wild rice) <input type="checkbox"/> Soup, Chili, or Stew (with whole-wheat macaroni or whole-grain barley) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Snack <input type="checkbox"/> Side Dish <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast (featuring oatmeal or ready-to-eat breakfast cereals, such as whole-grain cereal flakes or muesli) <input type="checkbox"/> Cheese and Cracker Snack (with whole-grain crackers) <input type="checkbox"/> Meatless Meal (featuring beans and brown rice) <input type="checkbox"/> One Pot Meal (with whole grains, veggies, and beans or meat in a slow cooker) |
|---|---|



CACFP Crediting Tip:
 Include the full portion of grain/bread, depending on the meal and the age of the child.



My Notes: