



Photo courtesy of Pixabay.com

EAT WELL, CARE WELL. WHOLESOME WHOLE GRAINS

There are many health benefits to eating whole grains. Grains are divided into subgroups: whole and refined. Whole grains include the whole grain kernel while refined grains have been milled that removes the bran and germ. Some examples of whole grains are whole-wheat flour, cracked wheat, oatmeal, whole grain cornmeal, and brown rice. Whole grains are an important source of complex carbohydrates, dietary fiber, B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folate), along with minerals (iron, magnesium, and selenium). Because of these important nutrients, whole grains can help reduce heart disease, support healthy digestion, help with weight management, and help prevent neural tube defects during pregnancy.

Shopping tips: Many products label whether they are whole or refined grains fairly easily nowadays, but always look at the beginning of the ingredient list for the word “Whole.” Whole grain products tend to have a shorter shelf-life, so check the expiration date and storage guidelines.

Swapping out refined for whole: Start off simple. Breakfast is one of the easier meals to swap in whole grains. Incorporate oatmeal or a whole grain cereal instead of your usual. Experiment with different grains like buckwheat, rice, quinoa, popcorn, etc.

Cereals: Many cereals are whole grain and if not, they tend to be fortified. Some examples of whole grain cereals include: Cheerios (original), Kashi, Fiber One, KIND, and so many more.

WEEKLY CHALLENGES

SWITCH ONE
REFINED GRAIN
FOOD TO A WHOLE
GRAIN

TRY ONE OF THE
RECIPES

HAVE A WHOLE
GRAIN SNACK

MAKE A WHOLE
GRAIN PASTA DISH

DID YOU KNOW?

CONSUMING WHOLE
GRAINS REGULARLY
MAY REDUCE THE RISK
OF HEART DISEASE.

Overnight Oats with Strawberries and Toasted Almonds (Serves 1)

Ingredients

- ½ cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ cup whole milk
- 1 tsp honey, plus more for serving
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- 1 cup quartered strawberries
- 2 tbsp slivered almonds, roasted



Instructions

1. In a small bowl or 12-ounce jar, combine the oats, honey, vanilla, and salt. Cover and refrigerate overnight or at least 6 hours.
2. Remove from refrigerator and stir. Top with strawberries and almonds. Drizzle with more honey, if desired.

Whole Grain Blueberry Muffins (Serves 6-8)

Ingredients

- 1 ¼ cup whole-wheat flour, spooned and leveled
- 1 cup old-fashion rolled oats
- ¼ cup flaxseed meal (If available)
- ¼ cup pecans
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tbsp grated orange zest, plus ¼ cup orange juice
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups fresh blueberries or 1 8 oz. frozen blueberries

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees F. Line a standard 12-cup muffin tin with liners. In a food processor, process flour, oats, flaxseed, pecans, baking soda, and salt until finely ground.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the yogurt, sugar, butter, orange zest and juice, egg, and vanilla. Add the flour mixture and mix until just incorporated. Fold in blueberries.
3. Divide the batter evenly among the muffin cups. Bake for about 22-25 minutes, until a toothpick can be inserted into the center and comes out clean.

Source: <https://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/overnight-oats-strawberries-toasted-almonds> and <https://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/whole-grain-blueberry-muffins>