



# Healthy Kids

LSU AgCenter Nutrition Programs Newsletter

## Whole Grains: The Whole Story!

Do you know how whole-grain foods differ from regular grain products? Whole-grain products use the entire grain seed, called the kernel. The kernel has three parts: the bran, the germ and the endosperm. In processing, the bran and the germ are lost. That's important because the bran and the germ are high in fiber and phytonutrients. They are lost during processing.

One difference between whole grains and refined grains is that whole grains are higher in fiber. The other is that the outer layer of grain contains most of the important phytonutrients. Phytonutrients help ward off chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

Whole grains are healthy for you. They are an important source of fiber, phytochemicals and nutrients. Here are some examples of whole-grain foods:

- ◆ Whole-wheat bread
- ◆ Some breakfast cereals
- ◆ Brown rice
- ◆ Oatmeal
- ◆ Popcorn



### What counts as 1 serving?

- 1 slice of whole-wheat bread
- 1 cup of ready-to-eat bran cereal
  - 1/2 cup oatmeal
- 1/2 cup cooked brown rice or whole-wheat pasta

Remember, to grow strong and stay healthy, eat whole grains more often. These ideas may help you add more whole grains to your meals:

- **Wake up and carb up! Breakfast is the most important meal, so try some healthful cereals with milk or eat a bowl of oatmeal.**
- **Snack on low-fat popcorn.**
- **If you like peanut butter and jelly, make a sandwich with whole-wheat bread.**
- **Ask your parents to order a pizza with whole-wheat crust for a change.**



## Parents' Corner

At least half of the grains children eat every day should be whole grains. Depending on their age, gender and physical activity level, children and adolescents need between 1 ½ and 5 servings of whole grains a day. For example, a moderately active 8-year-old girl or boy needs 5 servings of grains a day. From that, 2 ½ - 3 servings should be whole grains. It is recommended that children add more whole grains to their diets as they grow.



How can you tell which foods are made from whole grains? This information is on the food label. Read the "Ingredient List" and look for words like "whole" or "whole grain." The whole grain should be the first ingredient listed. "Wheat flour" and "enriched flour" are not whole grains.

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To find out more, contact your parish agent.