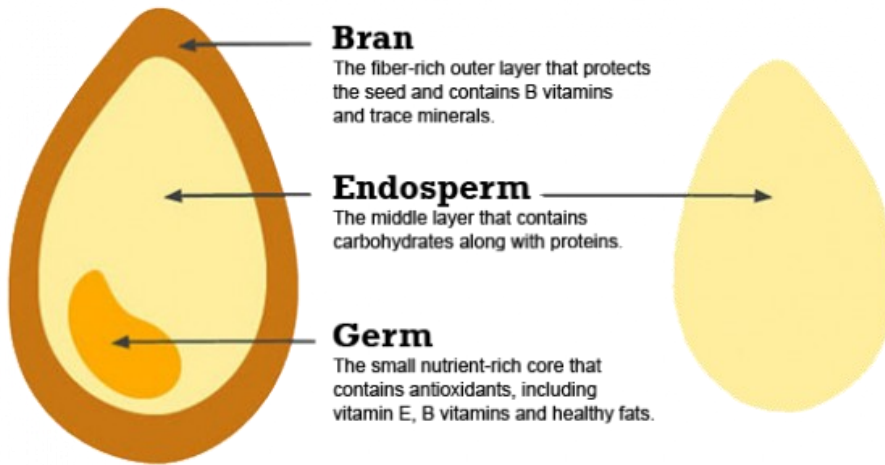




Getting More Whole Grains

Whole Grain

vs. "White" Grain



When people think of whole grains, they often only think of whole wheat bread. While, yes, whole wheat is a whole grain; there are many others! All grains start off as "whole" meaning that any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or another cereal grain is a grain product. Whole grains just means that the grain has retained the bran, endosperm, and germ during processing. Refined, or "white" grains generally do not have as much nutrients as whole grains. Occasionally they are "enriched" or "fortified" which means they have nutrients added back in— but it is only about 1/3 of what they take

away and excludes many nutrients such as fiber. Whole grains are important as part of one's diet for many reasons: they can help with weight management and diabetes, they help reduce cholesterol, lower blood pressure, and can reduce intestinal discomfort, like constipation. Including whole grains as part of a healthy diet can be a challenge, but here are some easy ways to try and make at least half the grains you eat be whole:

1. Whole wheat bread is not your only option. Try brown rice instead of white rice or whole wheat pasta instead of white pasta .
2. Use whole wheat flour in baking instead of white flour. They can generally be replaced 1 for 1 in any recipe, but if you do not really like wheat flour, do a mix of half all-purpose flour and half whole wheat flour.
3. Don't be fooled by "multi grain" or "7 grain stone ground" on the packaging. This means that the item has multiple different types of grains in it, but many of them may not be whole.
4. To tell if a grain is whole you can look for the "WHOLE GRAINS" stamp on the packaging— indicating it is a good source of whole grain. See logo above for the two different types of stamps. A healthy goal is to consume 48 grams of whole grains daily.
5. If you are still not sure if the item is a whole grain— read the ingredients list and choose products that name a whole grain *first* on the list. Look for "whole wheat", "bulgur", "buckwheat" , "whole grain brown rice" etc.

Butternut Squash Mac and Cheese

5 servings

Source: Adapted from [Food Network, Rachael Ray](#)

- 1 lb small whole wheat pasta (twists or mini penne)
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1/2 medium onion, grated
- 2 tsp dried or 2 Tbsp fresh thyme leaves, chopped
- 3 Tbsp flour
- 2 c chicken stock (can use bouillon paste or cubes)
- 1 (10 oz) box frozen butternut squash, defrosted
- 1 c whole milk or half and half
- 2 c (8 oz) sharp cheddar, grated or shredded
- 1/2 c grated Parmigiano (couple of handfuls)
- Optional: 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Directions: Place frozen squash into microwave to thaw it, about 2 minutes. Heat a pot of water to boil for the pasta. Salt the water then add the pasta and cook per package instructions. While pasta cooks, heat a medium heavy bottomed pot over medium heat. Add the oil and butter. When butter is melted, add the thyme and grated onion. Cook onion for 1 to 2 minutes, then add the flour and cook together 1 to 2 minutes, stirring continuously. Whisk in stock, then combine with the thawed butternut squash until warmed through and smooth. Stir in milk and bring sauce to a bubble. Stir in cheeses and season the completed sauce with salt, nutmeg (optional) and pepper. Taste to adjust seasonings. Drain cooked pasta well and combine with sauce.

For more info and recipes with whole grains, check out heart.org or wholegrainscouncil.org websites