



6 Reasons to (Absolutely) Love Whole Grains

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Chapter 1



What *are* whole grains ...
and why should
we care?



Whole grains used to be all the rage back when people “allowed” themselves to eat carbohydrates. Of course, not only *can* we still eat carbs, but we *should* be including whole grain nutrition into our diets every day.

Kassandra Gyimesi, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

What *are* whole grains... and why should we care?



We probably all know whole grains are good for us, but not everyone knows why — or even what whole grains are!

According to the [Whole Grains Council](#), all grains start life as whole grains. The seed, or kernel, contains three edible parts: the bran, the germ, and the endosperm. However, refined grains normally have the bran and the germ removed, along with about 25% of the grain's protein.

Refining also greatly reduces the amount of 17 key nutrients found naturally in whole grains. Whole grains include grains like wheat, corn, rice, oats, barley, quinoa, sorghum, spelt, rye — even popcorn! — when these foods are eaten in their “whole” forms. ♥



Chapter 2



6 Reasons to (Absolutely) Love Whole Grains

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It's probably no surprise that eating whole grains gives us numerous benefits. Grains provide many nutrients that are vital for the health and maintenance of our bodies, and people who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.

Here are 6 reasons to absolutely love whole grains!

- 1. Whole grains help you control your weight.** Yes, it's true! Studies show that both men and women who eat whole grains consistently can reduce the amount of weight they might gain.
- 2. Whole grains can help you live longer.** According to scientists at Harvard, people who ate the most whole grains had a 16% lower risk of death from all causes compared to people who ate the least whole grains.

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3. Whole grains have three to five times the vitamins and minerals in refined grains! Whole grains are great sources of fiber and other important nutrients, such as selenium, potassium, and magnesium.



4. Whole grains help lower your blood pressure. Belly up to that bowl of oatmeal! Eating a whole-grain oat cereal every day can help to reduce or eliminate the need for blood pressure medication.

5. Whole grains are antioxidant powerhouses! Corn has almost twice the antioxidant activity of apples, while wheat and oats almost equal broccoli and spinach in antioxidants.

6. Whole grains give you longer-lasting energy! Healthy carbs — such as those in whole grains — break down into energy over time, so you stay peppier longer. Plus, when you feel fuller, you're less likely to rush to the vending machine for junk food! ♥



Chapter 3

How to get more
whole-grain nutrition
every day ... and
enjoy it



Eating a variety of whole grains not only ensures that you get more health-promoting nutrients, but also helps make your meals and snacks more interesting.

Kassandra Gyimesi, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

Get whole-grain nutrition every day ... and enjoy it



Whole grains are good ... and good for us! Use this checklist from the [Mayo Clinic](#) to add whole-grain nutrition to your meals and snacks.

- ❑ **Start with whole grains at breakfast!** Look for whole-grain cereals, such as whole-wheat bran flakes, but be sure to read the labels. Some bran flakes may just have the bran, not the whole grain. Load up on whole grains — and great taste — with shredded wheat and oatmeal, too.
- ❑ **Why not enjoy whole-wheat toast** instead of white, or whole-grain bagels instead of plain ones? Choose low-fat muffins made with whole-grain cereals such as oatmeal or bran in pastries, for a feel-good morning.
- ❑ **We all love sandwiches, so power yours up** using whole-grain breads or rolls. Swap out white-flour tortillas with whole-wheat versions, too.

Get whole-grain nutrition every day ... and enjoy it



- ❑ **If you've only tried white rice, you don't know what you're missing!** Tonight, replace that white rice with kasha, brown rice, wild rice, or bulgur ... and enjoy!
- ❑ **Yum ... when the weather gets cooler, feature wild rice or barley** in soups, stews, and casseroles.
- ❑ **Add whole grains to ground meat** (such as [lean and healthy bison!](#)) or poultry for extra body.
- ❑ **For even-better taste and texture, use rolled oats** or crushed whole-wheat bran cereal in recipes instead of dry bread crumbs.

The Mayo Clinic recommends that at least half of the grains in your diet should be whole grains. But it's not always easy to tell what kind of grains a product has, especially bread, because the brown color may simply be added. Check the product or Nutrition Facts panel and look for the word "whole." Make sure whole grains appear among the first ingredients. ♥



Chapter 4

RECIPE: Whole-Grain Spelt Salad With Leeks & Marinated Mushrooms



Photo not actual depiction of recipe



Grain salads are forgiving and flexible, and nutty spelt takes well to all kinds of vegetables such as fennel, arugula, or carrots. Here's a recipe for a whole-grain spelt salad we love from *Serious Eats*.

Kassandra Gyimesi, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

Whole-Grain Spelt Salad With Leeks & Marinated Mushrooms

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup plus 1 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 lb. cremini mushrooms, diced
- 1 large (12-ounce) leek, [diced](#)
- 2 medium cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp picked thyme leaves, minced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup plus 2 Tbs cider vinegar, divided
- 6 cups [cooked](#) whole-grain spelt (from about 24 oz. dry)
- 2 small Persian cucumbers, quartered lengthwise, then sliced crosswise into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup minced flat-leaf parsley
- 1/4 cup minced chives
- Espelette pepper powder, for garnish (optional)

Whole-Grain Spelt Salad With Leeks & Marinated Mushrooms

Directions:

1. In a large skillet, heat 3 Tbs of oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, until tender and water has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Add leek, garlic, and thyme; season with salt and pepper, and cook until leek is tender, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and stir in 1/4 cup of cider vinegar. Let stand 15 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, stir together spelt, cucumbers, and mushroom-leek mixture. Stir in remaining 6 Tbs of olive oil, 2 Tbs of cider vinegar, parley, and chives; and season with salt and pepper. Spoon salad into bowls and sprinkle with espelette pepper, if using.

Serve and enjoy!

Additional Resources



Get Healthy with Whole Grains

You know whole grains are good for you — here are some resources to learn more about their benefits, as well as ways to (absolutely) love whole grains!

[18 Benefits of Whole Grains](#), from *Health* magazine.

[Why is it important to eat whole grains?](#) from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

[Choose whole grains instead of refined](#), from Harvard School of Health.

[Whole grains: Hearty options for a healthy diet](#), from the Mayo Clinic.

[The Impact of Whole Grains on Health](#), from *Today's Dietitian* magazine.

And for more great recipes, try [these](#) from the Whole Grains Council!

About PlainSmart Wellness and Weight Management

The founding principle behind PlainSmart Wellness and Weight Management is that real people need real solutions created just for them and their unique needs and goals. We know that fad diets and one-size-fits-all plans are boring, all too typical, and often just don't work.

That's why we decided to offer everyday people the tools and counseling to actually change lives:

- Personalized nutrition coaching and fitness advice from Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs)
- Science-based diagnostic tools and the most current technologies for monitoring success
- Healthy and delicious foods that please both your taste buds and your appetite

Our Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) are the very heart of your program and provide you with the highest level of nutritional counseling. We also become your accountability partner and empathetically educate, coach, and motivate you to modify old behaviors and enhance your lifestyle so you can finally slim down in a healthy way that lasts a lifetime.

With our exclusive TruYou™ Full-Body Profile diagnostic tools, including DNA testing and body composition analyses, our RDNs understand your history as well as your current and future health needs to create a program made exclusively for you. We work with you individually so you receive the one-on-one attention, education, and empowerment you deserve.

We're ready to accelerate your health and weight loss initiatives ... are you?



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