

Go for whole grains

From promoting bowel regularity to maintaining a healthy body weight and preventing the risk of developing diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some forms of cancers, the benefits of whole grains are endless.

[Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide](#) recommends Canadians obtain at least half of their grain intake from whole grains each day. This is because whole grains contain dietary fibre and beneficial vitamins and minerals.

Whole grains are grains that have undergone the least amount of processing. Whole grains consist of:

Grain part:	Nutrients:
Bran	Dietary fibre, B vitamins, zinc, iron, magnesium, selenium, antioxidants
Germ	B vitamins, vitamin E, protein, minerals, phytochemicals, healthy fats
Endosperm	Carbohydrate, protein, small amounts of vitamins and minerals

When grains are refined, most of the bran and the germ are removed, leaving only the endosperm. The refining process also removes most of the dietary fibre, vitamins and minerals. Because most of the nutrients are gone, it is wise to choose whole grain products to obtain the beneficial nutrients of all three parts of the grain.

How to choose whole grains?

To choose whole grain products wisely, look at the ingredient list and check for the words, "whole" and "whole grain". The term "whole" or "whole grain" should appear first on the ingredient list.

"Whole wheat" does not usually mean "whole grain". In fact, most whole wheat products are made with refined grains. If you are looking for a "real" whole wheat product, make sure the wording on the ingredient list is stated as "whole grain whole wheat".

To boost your whole grain intake, enjoy a variety of whole grains such as barley, brown rice, oats, quinoa and wild rice.

For more information:

[Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide](#)

[Going with the Grain](#)

[EatRight Ontario: Cooking with Whole Grains](#)

Do you have questions on nutrition and healthy eating? Contact *EatRight Ontario* at 1-877-510-5102 to speak to a Registered Dietitian.