



Nutrition News and Tips

Whole Grains = Fiber

Whole-grain foods have the nutrient-packed bran, or fiber, parts of the plant. Fiber promotes regularity by moving food through the digestive tract and makes you feel full, so you are less likely to overeat. Whole grains also contain protective substances that may help prevent heart disease.

Reading Labels: Find the Whole Grain

Look for these whole grains as the first entry on a food label's ingredient list:

- Brown Rice
- Oatmeal
- Whole Corn
- Whole Wheat
- Graham Flour
- Popcorn
- Whole Rye
- Whole Barley

Refined vs. Whole Grain

Refined grains have the bran removed. Enriched flour and wheat flour, for example, are not whole grain. While refined grains are fortified with B vitamins and minerals, they are not a source of fiber.

Eating a variety of grain foods each day will help ensure that young children get important nutrients for growth, energy, and lifelong good health.

Choose a Variety of Grains Daily

All grain foods – such as breads, cereals, pasta, and rice – are nutritious choices and should be a part of every meal. Experts recommend that children and adults aim for two or three whole-grain products each day, along with other refined grain foods.

The list below features the amount in one serving of basic grain foods, as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Use the portion sizes for guidance only. Offer a young child a serving that you know he can successfully eat, or let the child choose the portion size, even if it is just a small cracker. Remember that day to day, young children's appetites will vary. If they have enough energy to play and grow, they are probably getting enough food. Offer healthful food choices and children will be sure to choose nutritious foods.

- 1 slice of bread
- 1/2 cup cooked rice or pasta
- 1/2 cup cooked cereal
- 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal

For more information on how the Grain Group fits into a young child's overall diet, refer to the USDA Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children.

Instead of	Substitute	serving idea
White bread	100% whole-wheat, rye, or other breads	Toasted with all-fruit spread
Plain English muffin	Whole-wheat or rye English muffin	Mini-pizza with tomato sauce and cheese
Refined grain breakfast cereal	Whole grain breakfast cereals	Refined and whole grain cereals mixed together; hot oatmeal with raisins
White crackers	Whole-wheat, rye, and graham crackers	Whole-wheat and rye crackers with cheese and grapes; graham crackers with milk
Flour tortillas	Corn tortillas or taco shells	Filled with refried beans and topped with melted cheese



Research Says: Eat Breakfast!

Start the day with a nutritious breakfast: Doesn't that sound like something your grandmother might have said? It still holds true. A Minnesota study of school-age children found that when students ate breakfast, they had fewer discipline problems, fewer visits to the school nurse, and higher test scores than when they skipped the morning meal.

Breakfast Basics

After a long night of sleep, your child (and you) needs to "break the fast" with a healthy mix of foods. Offering a variety of foods, with an emphasis on whole-grain choices, helps ensure that children start the day with plenty of nutrients. Build a breakfast that includes three foods from three different food groups – such as grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat, beans, and nuts. Here are suggestions for nutritious – and delicious – breakfasts that are easy as 1-2-3!

1. Choose a **WHOLE-GRAIN** food, such as whole-wheat toast, honey-sweetened granola bar, or cereal to get fiber, B vitamins, and iron. Opt for cereals with at least 2 grams of fiber per serving. Serve sweetened cereals only occasionally. Use the Nutrition Facts label to check fiber and sugar content.
2. Choose a **DAIRY** food such as cheese, low-fat milk, or yogurt for calcium and protein. Soy milk fortified with calcium is also a good option.
3. Choose a **FRUIT**. Breakfast is a good time for serving fruits that are high in vitamin C, such as 100-percent orange juice and other citrus fruits or low-sugar juices, cantaloupe, strawberries, and kiwi. But any fresh, canned, or frozen fruit your child likes is a good choice!

Tips for Sunny Morning Meals (even when your in a rush!)

With family members going in different directions, mornings are often hectic. Add to that young children who may be finicky eaters, and breakfast can become a battle of wills. Here are tips for making breakfast easier and more pleasant for you and your child. (Always watch young children as they eat. They are at risk of choking on food.)

- Rise early enough so that your child is fully awake when sitting down to breakfast.
- Offer healthful choices and let your child choose what and how much he wants to eat.
- Opt for foods your child likes, not necessarily typical breakfast choices. Cold pizza, sliced lunchmeat, and soup are all fine for morning too.
- Milk is an easy way to get important nutrients. Most experts agree that young children should have a high-calcium food at every meal.
- Make a trail mix of low-sugar cereal and dried fruits for the ride to school. This may be a calmer time for your child, and a bag of nutritious nuggets can be very inviting.
- Be a good role model and eat breakfast, even if it's a small one.

When Your Child Won't Eat Breakfast

Don't make a fuss. Just be sure to tell the teacher or day care provider that your child did not have breakfast. Your child will eat when she is ready.