

Grain Group

Make half your grains whole.



The grain group contains foods made from wheat, rice, oats, corn, and barley. Foods found in the grain group such as bread, pasta, oatmeal, cereal, and tortillas are our body's main source of energy. These foods are also good sources of fiber, iron, B vitamins, and protein. Grains are divided into two different groups: whole grains and refined grains. Whole grains contain the whole grain kernel. Refined grains have been put through a process that removes the fiber, iron, and many B vitamins. Iron and B vitamins are often added back into refined products, but the fiber is not. See the boxes below for examples of whole and refined grains.

Whole Grains

Whole wheat flour
 Whole wheat bread and crackers
 Whole wheat pasta
 Whole wheat tortillas
 Oatmeal
 Whole grain cereals (toasted O's, whole wheat flakes)
 Brown and wild rice
 Popcorn
 Buckwheat
 Bulgur

Refined Grains

White flour
 White bread
 Noodles (spaghetti, macaroni)
 Flour and some corn tortillas
 Some ready-to-eat breakfast cereals (cornflakes)
 Crackers and pretzels
 White Rice

*Look on the ingredient label for the word "enriched" when buying refined grains.

How much do you need to eat?

The exact amount of grains that you need to eat depends on your age, sex, and how much physical activity you get each day. A typical person should aim to eat **6 ounces** of grains each day. At least 3 ounces should be whole grains, such as those listed above.

One ounce of grains equals:

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal (toasted O's, whole wheat flakes, etc)
- ½ cup cooked pasta, cooked cereal (oatmeal or grits), or cooked rice
- ½ English muffin or bun
- 1 (6-inch) tortilla
- 3 cups popped popcorn



Know how. Know **now**.

‘Fill up’ on FIBER

Fiber can help lower the risk of some types of cancer and heart disease. Fiber-rich foods are usually lower in fat and help us feel more “full” after eating.

Good Sources of Fiber: whole wheat bread, oatmeal, bran flakes, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, legumes, fruits, and vegetables.

Eat Healthy & Save Money Too!

Grains are good for you and are low in cost. Try these ideas to get the most for your food dollar:

- \$ Extend meat dishes by adding pasta, oats, bread, rice and/or vegetables to make a tasty dish such as spaghetti, meat loaf, stir-fried rice, and casseroles. See the easy recipe below “Taco Rice Skillet.”
- \$ “Day-old” breads cost less and can be used for toast, bread crumbs and stuffing.
- \$ Whole grain cereals have the most nutrition for your dollar. Choose cereals that are higher in fiber and lower in sugar such as toasted O’s.
- \$ Compare the cost per ounce of different brands and sizes of cereals to see which cost less.
- \$ Plain shapes of pasta usually cost less than fancy shapes.

Taco Rice Skillet

Makes 4 servings

- 1 pound ground beef (about 2 cups, cooked)
- 2 cups instant brown rice, uncooked
- 2 cups water
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1 package taco seasoning mix*
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese



1. Brown ground beef in a large skillet, rinse with hot water and drain.
2. Add rice, water, tomato, and taco seasoning mix; stir until well blended. Bring to a boil. Sprinkle with cheese; cover. Remove from heat. Let stand 5 minutes.
3. Serve topped with shredded lettuce and other taco toppings, if desired.

*Make your own taco seasoning mix using these ingredients: 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon chili powder, 1/2 teaspoon cornstarch, 1/2 teaspoon crushed dried red pepper, 1/2 teaspoon cumin, 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, and 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano leaves.

Nutrition Information per Serving: 550 calories, 27 g fat, 11 g saturated fat, 115 mg cholesterol, 780 mg sodium, 37 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, 1 g sugar, 36 g protein, vitamin A 15%, vitamin C 8%, calcium 10%, iron 20%

Source: 55 Ways to Save at the Grocery Store, Virginia Cooperative Extension, mypyramid.gov, United States Department of Agriculture, May 2005.