



Whole Grain Bonus

Making Whole Grains a Part of Your Diet:

Your diet is so important and it is something that you have control over. It is important that you make the right choices with each type of food you allow to enter your system. Choosing whole grains over processed food can change so much in the way you feel, and help you to move toward your goal of having a baby friendly body. I have shared with you the difference between simple carbohydrates and complex carbohydrates. Now I want to encourage you to reach for the complex carbohydrate instead of the simple carbohydrate. It is important to understand what I mean when I talk about whole grains. I want to give you some yummy ideas and suggestions that will make it easier for you to eat healthier.

Remember that in choosing the whole grains, you are giving your body a source of carbohydrate that will have a lower, slower effect on your blood sugar and insulin rather than that quick spike and drop effect that highly refined simple carbohydrates have on your system.

For a long time the general populace ate grains that came straight from the stalk. All the goodness was still there, all three layers that our body needs. Whole grains have a tough, fibrous outer layer called bran that protects the inside of the kernel. The interior contains mostly the starchy endosperm. This endosperm provides stored energy for the germ, which is the seed's reproductive kernel and is nestled inside the endosperm. The germ is rich in vitamins, minerals, and unsaturated oils. Whole grains are foods containing all three parts of grains nutrients: the fibrous bran, the starchy endosperm, and the vitamin-rich germ. Some examples of these whole grain foods would include whole or cracked wheat, oatmeal, brown rice, barley, and popcorn. Other foods that can fall into this category would be whole grain crackers, cereal, breads, and pastas.

You need to remember that processing completely changes the character and content of whole grains to where they are no longer whole. Because the oils in the germ can turn rancid sitting on the shelf, the grains are processed, removing the germ and the bran. This makes the grain easier to chew, easier to digest, and gives it a longer shelf life. Light, airy breads and pastries are created using fluffy flour made from refined grain. When the bran and the germ is taken away the grain loses more than half of the B vitamins and 70% of its iron. These are both important for ovulation and conception. It also loses 90% of the vitamin E and virtually all the fiber. Processing also tears apart the starch which should be digested slowly, but as the starch has been changed from an intact nugget into millions of minuscule particles, the starch-digesting enzymes in your body can break these particles apart in a flash. Again, you have the quick release and the sudden sugar blast that your body struggles to cope with and only a fraction of the grain's original nutrients, the nutrients your body needs to be strong, healthy, and baby friendly.



Grains that are whole or only minimally processed allow for slower, lower, and steadier increases in your blood sugar and insulin levels. They also nourish your body with more fiber, vitamins, minerals, and other healthful nutrients.

Now that you know about whole grains and the difference between whole grains and processed grains, I want to help you make this practical as you make choices in your diet.

Breakfast is an easy meal to make healthy with whole grains. There are whole grain breakfast cereals like Total or Great Grains available that would be a perfect start to your day. Switch from having juice to fresh fruit with your whole grain cereal and you have a really yummy, good-for-you breakfast! This is a great start toward eating healthier carbohydrates. Other good breakfast options would include oatmeal (not the instant), granola (check the label carefully or make your own), whole wheat toast, whole wheat English muffins, or a whole wheat bagel.

For lunch, it is a healthy choice to make your sandwich on whole wheat bread or in a whole wheat pita.

Oven crisped rice cakes makes a great snack, as do whole wheat crackers dipped in hummus. Either of these is so much better for you than microwave popcorn, potato chips, cookies or candy.

For dinner the semolina or whole wheat pasta blends can be used in recipes that call for processed pasta. After you begin to get more accustomed to the flavor changes, it is fun to venture into whole wheat pastas. Other whole grain options that you can substitute for pasta would be couscous or brown rice. I use a lot of brown rice spaghetti and pasta for pasta salad and other dishes calling for various forms of pasta. Wheat berries, bulgur, quinoa, or wild rice are also good alternatives that offer good nutrition and some variety to your diet.

Now that you have some ideas on how to choose those healthy carbohydrates that work toward your goal of a baby friendly body, I would like to encourage you one step further. One of the best things you can do for your diet is to begin to grind your own wheat for all your baking needs. It is not difficult to bake bread or make your own mixes for pancakes and cookies. And the taste will delight your palate as the increased nutrition enhances your diet. You can buy whole wheat flour at the store, but they have removed the wheat germ to increase the shelf life, so some of the benefits are missing. The best is to grind your own wheat. For everyday baking I like to use soft wheat berries. This would be good for cookies, pancakes, muffins, and non-yeast baking. For baking with yeast I really like the Golden 86 wheat berries, or sometimes they are called white wheat berries. Both these types of berries have a light nutty flavor and are easy to use in baking.



When you first begin it might be easier to start with using half fresh ground whole wheat and half white flour. Then you can slowly increase the amount of whole wheat you use to achieve the best mix for you. If you grind more wheat than you need in a recipe, it is best to store the excess whole wheat flour in the freezer or refrigerator, as it can go rancid very quickly as explained previously. I cannot emphasize enough how good fresh ground flour is for you.

So now all you need to know is where to purchase a grain mill, a great mixer or a bread machine, and the wheat berries you will need to make the delicious, nutritious whole wheat products that you are now craving.

Check out my favorite grain mill, [the Nutri Mill](#).

You can find the bread mixer and strong blender combination that I use to make homemade whole wheat bread and blender pancakes [here](#).

And if you'd like some great, non-stick, tin bread pans, I really like my [NorPro pans](#).

I can get red wheat at my local grocery store, but I get my spelt and whole oat grouts through my local co-op.

Here are a few are my favorite, nutritious whole grain recipes.



Pancake Master Mix

Make up the mix and store it in freezer or refrigerator.

10 cups whole wheat flour (ground from soft wheat berries)

2 cups unbleached white flour (can use all whole wheat)

½ cup baking powder

4 tsp salt

¾ cup sugar

4 cups nonfat dry milk (can also use soy milk powder)

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Store in air tight container.

Yield: 275 3" pancakes

To make a batch of pancakes:

1 cup Pancake mix

1 TBL oil

1 egg

¾ cup water

Mix until ingredients are combined. Bake on a hot griddle turning once.



Homemade Whole Wheat Bread

Grind 7-8 cups of hard wheat berries (can be hard red wheat berries or hard white wheat berries)

Heat 5 C water in microwave to 110-115 degrees (add to mixer)

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While water is heating put in Mixer:

4 tsp. salt

2 Tbl dough enhancer (not necessary)

2/3 C brown sugar

2/3 C oil

4-5 C Wheat Flour

Mix

Add:

2 Tbl Yeast

Mix

Let sponge 15 min (Just let it sit there. If the yeast is good and the water was the correct temperature, the mix should bubble up during the sponge.)

Add:

1/2 C Gluten

Mix in remainder of wheat & then add white flour till dough cleans sides of bowl.

Let mix/knead 7 min

Spray large bowl with Pam spray or oil

Place dough in prepared bowl and flip. (both sides will then have the oil on it)

Cover dough with plastic wrap and kitchen towel.

Let raise 40-50 min

Divide dough into four equal parts. Shape dough and put in four greased bread pans. Let rest 20 min.

Bake at 350° for 35 min.

Pull out of oven and enjoy with a piece of cheese on warm whole wheat bread!

Cool bread on sides on wire rack.



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