

Wholegrain facts

What are wholegrains?

- Grains are composed of three parts - the 'fibre-rich' outer layer (bran), the starchy middle (endosperm) and the 'nutrient packed' germ. The term wholegrain is used to describe any cereal such as wheat, barley or oats that includes all three parts of the grain.
- Foods in which 51% or more of the ingredients (by weight) consist of wholegrains are described as being 'wholegrain foods.'
- Porridge, wholemeal bread, wholegrain pasta, oatcakes and brown rice are all examples of wholegrain foods you can enjoy for breakfast, lunch, dinner or snacks.

How many should we eat?

- Experts recommend that adults eat a minimum of three 16g servings of wholegrain a day or the equivalent of 48g*, whichever you find easiest.
- Eating just three servings of wholegrain a day can help to reduce the risk of heart disease by up to 30%**
- Less than 5%* of UK adults fail to reach their recommended three servings a day (or 48g)***
- One third of adults fail to consume any wholegrains in their diet*
- A survey carried out in 2006****, revealed that many people don't even know what wholegrains are. A massive 56 per cent of people did not know that oatcakes contained wholegrain, whilst 44 per cent were unaware that porridge oats were a wholegrain.

Why are wholegrains good for us?

- Wholegrains also contain a wide variety of vitamins, including B vitamins and vitamin E, minerals and phytochemicals which all have antioxidant properties
- Wholegrains are a valuable source of carbohydrate, protein and dietary fibre
- Wholegrain foods can also help to reduce the risk of several types of chronic illnesses including stroke and certain types of cancer
- Studies show that eating wholegrain cereals can help protect against Type 2 diabetes*****
- Fibre rich foods such as wholegrain cereals provide slow release energy which helps keep blood sugar levels stable and reduce the urge to snack
- Wholegrain foods are high in fibre – ‘nature’s broom’ – which speeds the passage of waste material through the digestive system, giving potentially harmful substances less time to linger in the bowel

For further information, images and recipes visit
www.wholegraingoodness.com

- Ends -

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Editors notes:

- So what is wholegrain food? Wholegrains must retain all three parts of the grain; the bran, germ and endosperm. Wholegrain foods are classed as those that contain 51% or more wholegrain ingredients by weight per serving.
- Data from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) shows that consumption of wholegrain foods in Britain is extremely low. The survey revealed that one third of adults failed to consume any wholegrain foods on a daily basis and less than 5% consumed the recommended 3 or more servings per day
- The UK Joint Health Claims Initiative approved the following statement: "People with a healthy heart tend to eat more wholegrain foods as part of a healthy lifestyle". The Joint Health Claims Initiative (JHCI) was the UK predecessor to the role of the European Food

Safety Authority (EFSA), who has now assumed responsibility for assessment of health claims as part of the new EU claims Regulation on foods. JHCI offered pre-market advice and a Code of Practice for the food industry, enforcers and consumers and ensured that health claims on foods were both scientifically truthful and legally acceptable.

- HGCA aims to improve the production and marketing of UK grain. It provides market information to UK cereal farmers and producers, assists cereal product development, and promotes exports and funds research and development.
- To sign up for the Wholegrain Goodness newsletter email nutrition@hgca.com

*US department of Agriculture, January 2005

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****Survey of more than 1,400 principal shoppers across the UK, undertaken by Oxford Partnership on behalf of the HGCA October 2006

***** Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2008 Issue 2. Priebe MG, van Binsbergen JJ, de Vos R, Vonk RJ. *Whole grain foods for the prevention of type 2 diabetes mellitus*.
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