

Wholegrain tips – eating healthily on a budget

Just because you're watching your pennies it doesn't mean your health has to suffer. Wholegrains are full of flavour and can be enjoyed in a variety of ways throughout the day - porridge, wholemeal bread, wholegrain pasta, oatcakes and brown rice are all examples of wholegrain foods you can enjoy for breakfast, lunch, dinner or snacks.

Wholegrain Goodness has these great tips for eating healthily on a budget:

- Start the day with a bowl of porridge or wholegrain cereal, milk and seasonal fruits or chopped banana. Not only will you get the goodness of the 'whole' grain you will also have one of your 5-a-day portions of fruit and vegetables too
- Feeling peckish mid-morning? Instead of reaching for high fat / high salt snacks, which can be expensive, enjoy wholegrain crackers or oatcakes with low fat soft cheese or just on their own
- Wholegrains are great for those working at getting their weight down as they help to keep hunger pangs at bay for longer. The result is you should feel less tempted to snack between meals. And the less you snack, the less you'll spend!
- Make sandwiches for lunch with wholemeal bread, pittas or rolls. Pushed for time in the morning - why not make them up the night before, keep them in the fridge, then pack them in a small cool bag to take to school, college or work. Using leftover meat from your Sunday roast as filling is a great way to save money
- Using what we already have is a great way to cut down on our weekly shopping. We've all got Worcestershire sauce in our kitchen cupboards so why not make Welsh Rarebit? Use wholegrain bread for a tasty, healthy lunch

- Wholegrain breadcrumbs or oats makes a great topping for oily fish like salmon or mackerel. Not only do you get all the benefits wholegrains bring but oily fish is a great source of omega 3 fatty acids too
- They're also a good topping for macaroni cheese. Made with wholegrain pasta you get double the goodness, plus the calcium contained in the cheese. Use a low-fat cheese – its healthier but still full of flavour
- Switch to wholegrain or wholemeal pasta and brown rice for your evening meal. Cook a little extra and make it into a salad for lunch the next day - much cheaper than buying a ready made salad from your local shop
- For a healthy dessert try a homemade fruit crumble with a wholegrain topping. Another great way to include one of your family's portion of fruit as well as one of their wholegrain servings

Experts recommend that adults eat a minimum of three 16g servings of wholegrain a day or the equivalent of 48g*, whichever you find easiest. Ensuring you get your three servings of wholegrains a day can be as simple as swapping your usual cereal with one that contains wholegrain, choosing wholemeal bread for sandwiches. If you feel the need to snack choose oatcakes or popcorn rather than crisps and chocolate.

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

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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