



5 Grains

FIVE MEALS

Add more whole grains to your plate and you'll not only boost your chances of staying healthy longer, but you'll also perform better in the gym.

BY JESSIE R. SHAFER, RD, LDN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT REIFF
FOOD STYLIST: SANDRA CORDERO

THERE IS GOOD NEWS ON THE NUTRITION FRONT:

Studies show that the overriding health messages sent your way are slowly sinking in. You are turning over packages to read about the ingredients and nutrition values, you are making more meals at home, and you are taking in fewer saturated and trans fats. But there is one health message that still seems to evade most Americans: Eat more whole grains. In January 2014, the journal *Nutrition Research* noted results of the largest national nutrition and food intake survey that show only 8 percent of adults (and only 3 percent of children) are eating at least the recommended three daily servings of whole grains. That troubling statistic becomes cause for concern when research continues to attest that higher whole-grain consumption is linked to lower body mass index, lower body and belly fat, lower blood pressure, and reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes and certain cancers.

But the body benefits of eating more whole grains don't just stop at disease prevention. For active women like you, whole grains deliver a package of nutrition, so to speak, that helps you feel full for longer and gives you more energy and better blood flow.

So if whole grains are so beneficial for us, why are we still not getting the recom-

mended amount? It can't be blamed on lack of availability because there are 20 times more whole-grain products on the market today than there were a decade ago, according to the Mintel Global New Products Database. But, Cynthia Harriman, director of food and nutrition strategies for Oldways and the Whole Grains Council points out, it's not a matter of adding whole grains to what we're already eating but rather a matter of switching to whole grains.

"In general, people eat more grains than they need," Harriman says. Most of that comes in the form of refined wheat (white flour) in bread, pasta, cereal, crackers, and packaged and baked goods. The best strategy is to always purchase and make whole-grain versions of those foods and to eat a variety of whole grains. Also, if there are kids in your home, it would be beneficial to include them in your efforts to eat more whole-grain foods. Simply working in more oatmeal breakfasts, popcorn or granola snacks and dinners that include whole-grain pasta or whole-grain bread is a great way to bump up the entire family's intake of whole grains.

"Think of grains as vegetables," Harriman says. Eating a variety of whole grains works the same way. Don't just stop at whole-wheat bread and crackers, but try many whole grains, such as barley, quinoa, millet, farro and colored rices.

For more recipes, visit oxygenmag.com/nutrition/clean-recipes



Easy Ways to Eat More Whole Grains

If you take a step forward in your effort to eat more whole grains, start with breakfast by choosing oatmeal, whole-grain cereal or granola, or pancakes, muffins or waffles made with whole grains. The Whole Grains Council also recommends the following:

- When baking, substitute half the white flour in a recipe for whole-wheat flour.
- Replace one-third of the flour in a recipe with quick oats or old-fashioned oats.
- Add ½ a cup or more of cooked whole grains, such as barley or quinoa, to your favorite canned or homemade soup, side salad or casserole.
- Use whole cornmeal to make corn muffins and cornbread.
- Add ¾ of a cup of uncooked oats for each pound of ground meat when making meatballs, meatloaf or burgers.
- Stir a handful of granola or plain rolled oats into yogurt.
- Soak steel-cut oats overnight in milk or water to reduce cooking time in the morning.
- Make lunch sandwiches using whole-grain bread, pitas or wraps.
- Choose popcorn, a handful of dry whole-grain cereal or a few whole-grain crackers for a snack.



1. GRAIN
Brown Basmati Rice
 Brown basmati rice is an excellent source of manganese, a mineral that helps us digest fats and get the most out of the proteins and carbohydrates we eat.

Just **\$3.73** per serving!

SEARED TUNA OVER ASIAN BROWN BASMATI RICE

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

Serving Size: 3 ounces tuna,
 1 cup rice mixture and 1 tablespoon sauce
 Total Prep Time: 50 minutes
 Hands-On Time: 20 minutes

NUTRITION FACTS
 (per serving):
 calories 411, total fat 17 g
 (saturated fat 3 g, trans fat 0 g),
 sodium 635 mg, carbohydrates
 44 g (fiber 6 g, sugar 5 g),
 protein 26 g



- 1 cup uncooked brown basmati rice
- 2 cups water
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 12 ounce tuna steak
- salt and black pepper
- 1 cup shredded carrots (2 large or use pre-shredded)
- 1 avocado, diced

Directions

- In a medium saucepan, combine rice, water and ¼ teaspoon salt; bring to a boil. Cover pan with lid and reduce heat to low. Simmer 40 to 45 minutes, or until rice is tender and water is absorbed.
- In a small bowl, whisk together orange juice, soy sauce, sesame oil and ginger. Set aside 4 tablespoons of the mixture.
- Cut tuna steak in four pieces. Season both sides of tuna pieces with salt and pepper. About 10 minutes before the rice is done, place a large skillet over medium-high heat. When the skillet is hot, add tuna and sear it for 20 to 60 seconds per side, depending on your preferred doneness. Remove tuna pieces to a cutting board and cut each piece into thin slices.
- When the rice is cooked and the water has been absorbed, remove it from the heat. Stir carrot and avocado into the rice. Add orange-juice mixture (not the reserved 4 tablespoons) to the rice; toss gently until evenly coated. Divide rice mixture among four plates. Top each with one serving of sliced tuna. Drizzle 1 tablespoon of the reserved orange-juice mixture over each serving. Serve immediately.



Whole-Grain Myths

MYTH: Not eating grains and going low carb are great ways to lose weight.

TRUTH: Eliminating entire food groups, such as grains, is not only hard to do but also can lead to nutrient deficiencies. A diet that is hard to sustain is impractical and unnecessary for weight loss and almost always results in gaining weight back when the elimination period is over. Research out of Australia found that people on a low-carb diet for one year were angrier, depressed and more confused than those following a higher-carb diet. "As long as your carbohydrates are high quality with an emphasis on fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains, eating normal to higher amounts of carbohydrates is a great way to keep your energy and zest for living revving strong," Cynthia Harriman says.

MYTH: Wheat is the reason so many Americans are overweight.

TRUTH: While eating too much of anything can make you fat, wheat plays no special role in putting on the pounds. Being overweight and obese is never the fault of eating too much of one food but rather a result of lifestyle and total diet. Other countries have much higher per-capita wheat consumption but much lower rates of overweight citizens. The French, for example, consume nearly twice as much wheat per person as Americans but have about one-third our obesity rate.

MYTH: We are eating more wheat than we ever have in history.

TRUTH: Wheat consumption in the U.S. hit a peak in the 1870s at almost 230 pounds consumed per person per year. Wheat consumption declined steadily until the early 1970s when fast-food restaurants made more wheat-based foods readily available. In the last decade, wheat consumption has again been on a steady decline. It is currently at about half its peak.

MYTH: Eating gluten-free gives athletes an advantage.

TRUTH: Athletes who go gluten-free without having a medical reason to do so may fall short on energy, especially if they're not replacing gluten-containing items with other rich sources of carbohydrates, fiber, iron and B vitamins. Furthermore, there is no evidence that gluten-free eating offers any performance benefits over a balanced diet that contains gluten. Even those who can't eat gluten grains — because of celiac disease or gluten intolerance — have many grain choices because most grains naturally are gluten-free. The only four grains that aren't gluten-free are wheat, barley, rye and triticale, which is a wheat-rye hybrid.

2. GRAIN Teff

Teff contains far more calcium than any other grain, and it's also an excellent source of vitamin C, a nutrient not commonly found in grains.

Just
\$2.65
per
serving!

SAVORY TEFF CREPES WITH ASPARAGUS

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

Serving Size: 2 filled crepes
Total Time: 45 minutes
Hands-On Time: 40 minutes

NUTRITION FACTS (per serving):

calories 323, total fat 11 g
(saturated fat 4 g, trans fat 0 g),
sodium 616 mg, carbohydrates
36 g (fiber 7 g, sugar 9 g),
protein 23 g

- 1 cup teff flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup nonfat, 1% or 2% milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted vegetable or olive oil
- 1½ cups nonfat or 1% fat cottage cheese
- 1 tablespoon chipotle light mayonnaise
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 pound asparagus, trimmed and cut into 3-inch pieces

Directions

- Preheat oven to 250 degrees. In a medium bowl, combine teff flour and salt. Add milk, eggs and melted butter; whisk into a thin batter.
- To cook crepes, heat a 9-inch skillet. Dip edge of a paper towel in vegetable or olive oil and rub it quickly in the skillet to lightly coat the bottom. Pour ¼ cup of crepe batter in skillet and immediately lift, tilt and swirl skillet to coat the bottom of the skillet with a thin layer of batter. Place skillet back over the burner and heat until small bubbles start to form on the surface of the batter. Very carefully slide a thin rubber spatula around edge of crepe and gently lift it and flip it onto its other side. Cook crepe on the other side

No Grain, No Gain!

Research shows that as an active woman, you require higher amounts of macronutrients, such as carbohydrates and fiber, and micronutrients, such as iron and B vitamins. "Whole grains are an important and efficient source of all these nutrients and an easy way for active women to meet their carbohydrate and fiber requirements, which are an athlete's main source of fuel and sustained energy," says Jennifer McDaniel, MS, RDN, CSSD, and spokeswoman for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. "Additionally, iron from whole grains carries oxygen in the blood, B vitamins play a key role in metabolism and help form red blood cells, magnesium helps release energy from muscles and build bones, and selenium is important for a healthy immune system."

for about 30 seconds. Slide cooked crepe onto a baking sheet and cover crepe with a small piece of waxed paper.

- Repeat to make eight crepes total, wiping the skillet with a little more oil after every few crepes. Layer cooked crepes on the plate with a piece of waxed paper between each crepe. Place baking sheet in the oven to keep crepes warm while you prepare the filling.
- In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil. Saute onion and asparagus until onion is lightly browned and asparagus is tender.
- Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine cottage cheese and chipotle mayonnaise.
- To serve crepes, place two crepes on each plate. Top each crepe with 3 tablespoons of the cottage cheese mixture and ¼ of the warm sauteed onions and asparagus. If desired, roll crepes to enclose the filling. Serve immediately.

Tip: The crepes can be prepared up to two days ahead of serving. Cool, cover and refrigerate cooked crepes, then reheat crepes in a 250-degree oven before serving.

3. GRAIN Red Quinoa

Quinoa is one of the only plant foods that is a complete protein, offering all the essential amino acids in a healthy balance.

Just
\$2.23
per
serving!

TERIYAKI LETTUCE CUPS WITH RED QUINOA

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

Serving Size: 3 lettuce cups
with ⅓ cup filling in each
Total Time: 35 minutes
Hands-On Time: 20 minutes

NUTRITION FACTS (per serving):

calories 274, total fat 11 g
(saturated fat 1 g, trans fat 0 g),
sodium 319 mg, carbohydrates
34 g (fiber 7 g, sugar 9g),
protein 12 g

- 1 zucchini, quartered and sliced
- 1 yellow squash, quartered and sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 cup frozen, shelled edamame, thawed
- 2 tablespoons vegetable or olive oil
- 1 tablespoon dried cilantro
- salt and black pepper
- 1 cup red quinoa
- 2 cups water
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup teriyaki sauce
- ¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted
- 18 Bibb or Boston lettuce leaves (3-4 heads), rinsed and patted dry

Directions

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a large bowl, combine zucchini, yellow squash pieces, red bell pepper pieces and edamame. Drizzle oil over vegetables and sprinkle with cilantro, salt and black pepper; toss until evenly coated. Spread vegetables in an even layer on a rimmed baking dish. Roast vegetables in oven for 25 minutes or until tender and lightly browned, stirring after 15 minutes.

How to Cook Your Grains

Cook two to three times the amount you will need and store the extra for easy meals. Divide cooked grains into ½-cup or 1-cup portions and store them in the refrigerator or freezer. Cooked grains will stay tender and food safe up to five days in the refrigerator or up to three months in the freezer. Use the stove-top or slow-cooker method below.

• Stove-Top Method

As a general rule, use a 2-to-1 water-to-grain ratio when cooking whole grains on the stove top. Bring the water, uncooked grains and a pinch of salt to a boil in a saucepan over medium heat. Boil for one minute, then reduce the heat to low. Cover the saucepan and let the grains simmer until the water is absorbed, which can take 15 to 45 minutes, depending on the density of the grains. Read packages for recommended cooking times.

• Slow-Cooker Method

Use a 3-to-1 water-to-grain ratio when cooking whole grains in a 1½- to 2-quart slow cooker. Cover and set the cooker on the low-heat setting for six to eight hours. Check every few hours for tenderness, and remove grains from cooker when they are cooked to your liking. You may have to drain off some of the water if it has not all been absorbed. Leaving grains in the cooker too long will make them gummy.

- In a medium saucepan, combine quinoa, water and ¼ teaspoon salt; bring to a boil. Cover pan with lid and reduce heat to low. Simmer 20 to 25 minutes, or until quinoa is tender and water is absorbed.
- Meanwhile, toast the almonds in a small skillet and prepare the lettuce leaves.
- When quinoa has absorbed all the water and the vegetables are cooked, combine roasted vegetables and quinoa in a large bowl. Drizzle with teriyaki sauce and toss to coat.
- To serve, scoop ⅓ of the quinoa mixture into each lettuce leaf. Sprinkle with toasted almonds and serve.

Tip: Enjoy the quinoa mixture hot or cold — makes great leftovers!



4. GRAIN Millet

This grain is a high-magnesium, muscle-boosting addition to these tasty biscuits.



Just \$2.61 per serving!

CHICKEN CASSEROLE WITH MILLET BISCUITS

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

Serving Size: 1 cup chicken-veggie casserole and 1 biscuit
Total Time: 60 minutes
Hands-On Time: 15 minutes

NUTRITION FACTS
(per serving):
calories 540, total fat 24 g
(saturated fat 8 g, trans fat 0 g),
sodium 678 mg,
carbohydrates 51 g (fiber 8 g,
sugar 8 g), protein 33 g

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 cup 1/8-inch-thick sliced carrots (2 large)
- 1 cup sliced onion (1 small)
- 18-ounce package sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 3 cups shredded, cooked chicken thigh meat
- 1 16-ounce carton light sour cream
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1/2 cup uncooked millet
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup nonfat, 1% or 2% milk
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 egg

Directions

• Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic, carrots, onion and mushrooms; saute until carrots and onion are tender and mushrooms shrink and soften, about 10 min-

utes. When vegetables are tender, stir in corn and peas until heated, about three minutes. Remove skillet from heat and fold in the shredded chicken, sour cream, thyme and black pepper until well mixed. Transfer mixture to a 2 1/2-quart baking dish.

• Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine whole-wheat flour, millet, sugar, baking powder and salt; mix with a fork. Add milk, 3 tablespoons olive oil and egg; stir until a thick batter forms. Drop batter in six mounds on top of the chicken and vegetable mixture, using about 3 to 4 tablespoons per mound.

• Bake casserole in oven for 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in biscuits comes out clean. Serve immediately.

TIP: Grill or saute chicken ahead of time. It takes about 1.4 pounds or about 10 boneless, skinless chicken thighs (trimmed of fat) to make 3 cups shredded meat.



5. GRAIN Farro

(touted as the next quinoa!)
The fiber in farro is of the cholesterol-lowering type that helps remove LDL molecules from the bloodstream.



Just \$3.55 per serving!

FARROTTO WITH BASIL, TOMATOES AND FETA

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

Serving Size: about 1 1/4 cups
Total Time: 35 minutes plus soaking
Hands-On Time: 30 minutes

NUTRITION FACTS
(per serving):
calories 289, total fat 6 g
(saturated fat 3 g, trans fat 0 g),
sodium 580 mg, carbohydrates
44 g (fiber 5 g, sugar 2 g),
protein 11 g

- 1 cup uncooked farro, soaked 10-12 hours
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth, warmed
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup packed torn basil leaves
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta

Directions

• Rinse farro in water. Place farro in a bowl and cover with water. Soak 10 to 12 hours. After soaking, drain farro and set aside.
• Heat broth in medium saucepan over low heat.
• Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; saute until tender, about eight minutes. Add farro and Italian seasoning; stir to coat.
• Add 1/2 cup warm broth to skillet. Cook and stir, spreading farro and onion around skillet, until the liquid is almost all absorbed. Add another 1/2 cup broth and continue cooking and stirring until broth is almost all absorbed again. Continue with the remaining 2 cups of warm

broth, adding 1/2 cup at a time and cooking until liquid is almost completely absorbed before adding the next 1/2 cup broth. Continue cooking and gently stirring the mixture after each addition until the liquid is almost all absorbed.

• Remove skillet from heat and stir in tomatoes, basil leaves and 1/4 cup feta. Divide farrotto among four plates. Crumble the remaining 1/4 cup feta over servings. Serve immediately.

Tip: Cover farro with water when you first wake in the morning, and it will be fully soaked and ready to cook by dinnertime. ■

