

FAMILY FOOD SOLUTIONS

The GRAIN Group: The Best Energy Food

Looking for that burst of long-lasting energy? Try eating foods from the **grain group**. Grains provide carbohydrates that give energy so you can learn, play, and work.

The grain group includes any food product made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, rye, barley, or other cereal grains. Products made from these grains are bread, oatmeal, pasta (spaghetti and macaroni), cold or hot cereal, crackers, muffins, tortillas, and grits.

WHAT'S IN GRAINS?

DIETARY FIBER: Helps us feel full, which helps with weight management. Dietary fiber lowers cholesterol levels, helps lower the risk of heart disease, and helps with waste removal through the colon.

Good sources of fiber include whole grain products such as whole grain wheat bread, brown rice, and whole grain cereals. We need about 20–25 grams of fiber each day.

IRON: Carries oxygen through our blood to all of our organs and prevents anemia. Eating foods rich in vitamin C along with iron-fortified grain foods can help your body absorb the iron.

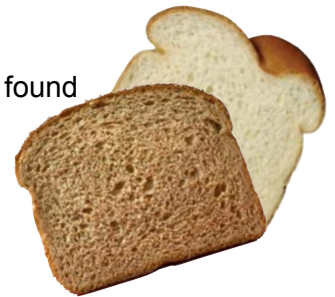
FOLATE: Important for everyone, but especially for women who are pregnant or who may become pregnant. Folate helps reduce the risk of having a baby with neural tube birth defects. Grain foods are fortified with folate.



HOW ARE REFINED GRAINS AND WHOLE GRAINS DIFFERENT?

Grains are broken into two groups: **refined grains** and **whole grains**.

- **Whole grains** contain all layers of the grain—bran, germ, and endosperm. Fiber is found in the bran and germ layers.
- **Refined grains** have the bran and germ layers removed, which removes the fiber.
- MyPlate suggests that we make half of our grain servings for the day **whole grain**. Just because bread looks brown doesn't mean it's **whole grain**. Read the nutrition label to make sure the food contains whole grains.



HOW TO ADD THE GRAIN GROUP TO MYPLATE

- Choose whole grain wheat bread more often than white bread.
- Cook with brown rice instead of white rice.
- Try whole wheat pasta instead of refined white pasta.
- Use whole grain bread or cracker crumbs in recipes instead of white bread crumbs.



HOW MUCH DO I NEED A DAY?

2 to 3 years of age: **3 ounces**

Females

4 to 13 years of age and 51 years and over: **5 ounces***
14 to 50 years of age: **6 ounces***
51+ years of age: **5 ounces**

Males

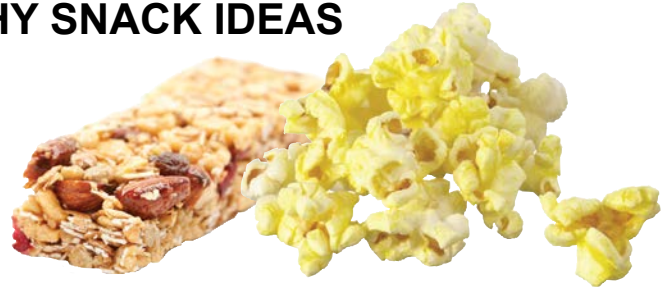
4 to 8 years of age: **5 ounces**
9 to 13 years of age and 51 years and over: **6 ounces***
14 to 30 years of age: **8 ounces***
31 to 50 years of age: **7 ounces***
51+ years of age: **6 ounces**

WHAT DOES AN OUNCE LOOK LIKE?

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 slice of bread | ½ cup of cooked pasta |
| 1 cup of cereal | ½ cup of cooked cereal (oatmeal) |
| ½ cup of cooked rice | 3 cups of popcorn |

GRAIN GROUP HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

- Whole wheat crackers topped with cheese
- Whole grain pretzels*
- Hot air-popped popcorn or lower-fat microwave popcorn
- Oatmeal cookies
- Whole grain granola bars
- Whole grain cereal
(you can even add this to yogurt to give it a healthy crunch)
- Whole grain trail mix with pretzels*, cheese crackers, raisins*, and whole grain cereal
- Homemade granola



*Pretzels and raisins can be choking hazards to young children. If you are not sure your child can eat pretzels and raisins without choking, do not serve them.

DINNER SOLUTION: STIR-FRY RICE, EGGS, & TURKEY HAM

| | |
|---|--|
| 1¾ cups brown rice, long-grain, regular, dry | ½ cup (2 oz) extra-lean turkey ham, diced ¼" |
| ½ tsp salt | ¼ cup fresh green onions, diced |
| ¾ cup frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained | 1 tsp sesame or vegetable oil |
| 5 large whole eggs, beaten | 1 tsp low-sodium soy sauce |
| 1 Tbsp vegetable oil | |

Directions

Combine brown rice and 4½ cups water in a large pot and bring to a boil. Turn heat to low. Cover and cook until water is absorbed, about 30–40 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Add salt to rice, mix well, and set aside. A rice cooker may be used with the same quantity of brown rice and water. Drain water from spinach by squeezing thawed spinach with hands. Set aside. Whisk together eggs and 1 tablespoon water. Cook half of the eggs in a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray. Remove eggs from skillet to cool. Chop cooled eggs and set aside. Heat vegetable oil in a wok or a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add ham and cook for 2 minutes or until ham begins to brown. Reduce heat to medium. Add brown rice and toss to mix. Add remaining eggs. Stir for 5 minutes or until egg is fully cooked. Add green onions, spinach, chopped egg, sesame oil, and soy sauce. Stir well. Cook until thoroughly heated. Serve hot.

Nutrition Facts: Amount per 1 cup serving:

Calories 238, Protein 9 g, Dietary Fiber 3 g, Total Fat 7 g, Saturated Fat 1 g, Cholesterol 74 mg, Sodium 313 mg

MyPlate: http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/grains_why.html | Recipe from whatscooking.fns.usda.gov

Serving size information: Recommended servings for each food group and the percent daily values listed on nutrition facts labels are based on a 2,000-calorie reference diet. They serve as guides to help determine daily intake. You may need fewer or more calories and servings of a nutrient, depending on your body size and activity level. For personalized information, visit www.choosemyplate.gov. You will enter information such as your age, sex, and level of activity to determine your calorie and serving needs.



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GARY B. JACKSON, Director (POD-03-16)