

healthy grains



It is no secret that healthy eating and regular activity help us achieve and maintain good health throughout life. There is no secret that grain based foods such as bread, breakfast cereals, pasta, rice and oats are an essential part of healthy eating for people of all ages.

Genesis 1:29 says that God gave us every seed for food. Seeds encompass grains, beans (legumes) and nuts. Bread brings sustenance and fellowship. Acts 2:42 'They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer' Verse 46 'Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts'. Jesus gave bread a high respect and used bread to symbolize Himself as the source of life. John 6 : 33-35

Given the nutritional importance of grain based foods, it is surprising that many Australians are not eating enough of these core foods and risk deficiency on certain nutrients they possess.

Healthy Eating Recommendations

Australian Dietary Guidelines for children, adolescents and adults recommend that we 'eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain'.

The actual amount that we eat from the breads, grains and cereal varies depending on age, body size, activity level and gender. As a general recommendation we can say that all Australians of all ages (from the age of 4) should eat at least 4 serves every day. This is the minimum requirement as any less will elicit carbohydrate cravings, excessive consumption of simple sugars and processed food. If inadequate amounts are

consumed you are at risk of decreasing your metabolic rate and slowing down weight loss.

Obviously the more active the child or adult is the more breads, grains and cereals that are required. The message is 4+ serves of grain based foods each day.

Are you eating enough?

A staggering 70% of Australians incorrectly believe they should be eating three or fewer serves of grain based foods each day, with only 17% correctly believing four or more servings each day is the right amount.

The last National Nutrition Survey carried out in Australia revealed that many people especially women were eating only around 3 or fewer serves per day.

The survey also showed that most Australians do not meet the recommended daily fibre target which is 25g for women and 30g for men. The survey indicated that 45% OF THE DIETARY FIBRE WE EAT COMES FROM BREADS AND CEREALS and lesser amounts from fruit and vegetables. This again adds fuel (bread and cereal fuel) to the argument to enjoy a variety of grain based foods (especially wholegrain varieties) every day!

Grains in a health diet

Grains such as wheat, oats, rye, barley, millet, rice and corn are used to make a wide range of foods including bread, crispbreads, crackers, ready to eat breakfast cereals, muesli, porridge, rice, pasta, noodles and couscous.

These foods contribute energy, dietary fibre and protein. They



meal plan

Breakfast: a bowl of wholegrain flaked cereal or porridge (1 serve) topped with plump prunes and low fat milk, served with a glass of fruit juice.

Morning Tea: fresh fruit and low fat yoghurt

Lunch: a wholemeal roll (2 serves) filled with lean ham, low fat cheese, avocado and salad. Water to drink and piece of fruit or fruit salad.

Afternoon tea: 2 multigrain/wholegrain crispbreads (1 serve) topped with low fat cream cheese/cottage cheese, fresh tomatoes and cracked pepper. Water, tea or coffee to drink

Dinner: small serve of steak and steamed vegetables and side salad. Low fat yoghurt and canned fruit in natural juice for dessert. Water.

how mu[n]ch?

Recommended Serves of Grain-Based Foods*

Children & Adolescents

4-7 years	5-7 serves/day
8-11 years	6-9 serves/day
12-18 years	5-11 serves/day

Woman

19-60 years	4-9 serves/day
Pregnant	4-6 serves/day
Breastfeeding	5-7 serves/day
60+ years	4-7 serves/day

Men

19-60 years	6-12 serves/day
60+ years	4-9 serves/day

What is a 'serve'?

One 'serve' of grain-based food:

- = 1 slice of bread
- = 1/2 medium bread roll
- = 2 crispbreads
- = 1/2 cup of cooked pasta, noodles, rice
- = 1/3 cup (uncooked) of porridge
- = 1 cup of breakfast cereal flakes
- = 1 1/2 wheat-flake or oat-flake breakfast biscuits
- = 1/3 cup of muesli

*National Health and Medical Research Council. Food for Health, Commonwealth Department of Health & Ageing, 2003.

are generally low in fat and provide B-group vitamins, vitamin E and many minerals.

Wholegrain varieties are higher in fibre, vitamins, minerals and protective substances such as antioxidants and phytonutrients.

High fibre diets can protect against heart disease, diabetes and some cancers and help with long term weight control.

Wholegrain food examples include mixed grain and wholemeal breads, wholegrain breakfast cereals, rolled oats, brown rice and wholemeal pasta

How to get more grains in your day!

Here are some tips to help include a minimum of 4 serves of grain based foods per day. This example meal plan is suitable for a woman with minimal activity trying to lose weight. A moderately active male or child/adolescent will need to double the grains/breads and cereals. If you are maintaining your current weight try introducing 1-2 serves of breads/grains and cereals in the evening.

Never skip meals and never skip breakfast! This will keep your metabolism working to boost energy and to control your weight.

To assist with weight loss, consume the majority of grains during the day, minimizing the amounts eaten in the evening. Lastly, the more exercise done, the more breads/grains and cereals required during the day.

The final grainy word.....

Grain foods play a vital role in your daily diet! Go 4+ serves of grains, breads and cereals every day.



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Desi's passion for good nutrition and lifestyle modification focuses on the whole family. She is active in helping individual members of the family, work together to sustain a non-deprivational eating plan for the rest of their lives.

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