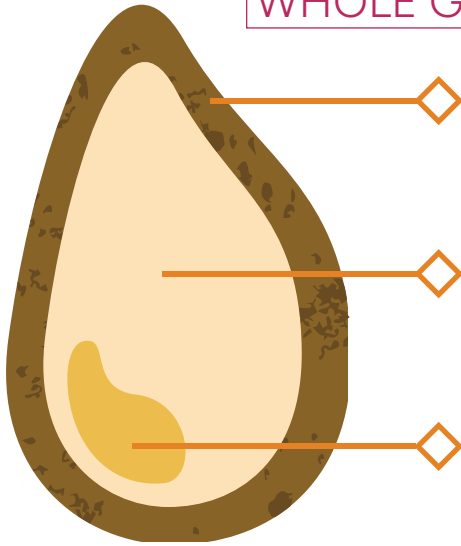


What Is a Whole Grain?

Grain refers to a variety of plant-based foods like oats, wheat, quinoa, brown rice, barley, and rye. Whole grains are grains that haven't been processed, so they still contain all the nutritious parts. When grains are refined, the outer layers that are high in fiber and vitamins are removed, leaving just the starchy center. This process creates refined grains such as white flour and white rice.

WHOLE GRAINS ARE A HEALTHIER CHOICE



BRAN

The outermost layer of the grain kernel, and contains antioxidants, B vitamins, and soluble or insoluble fiber, depending on the grain.

ENDOSPERM

The core of the grain and the largest portion. It contains primarily carbohydrates, but also some protein, vitamins, and minerals.

GERM

Another layer of the grain kernel. Germ contains more B vitamins, as well as protein, minerals, fats, and antioxidants.

REFINED GRAINS

- Digest quickly, causing a faster rise in blood sugar and insulin levels.
- Are less filling, leading to potential overeating.
- Are higher in calories but lower in nutrition.
- Some nutrients, like folate, are added back, but it's impossible to replace all the vitamins, fiber, and nutrients lost in processing.
- Be cautious with food labels; many processed foods claiming to have "whole grains" may contain mostly refined grains with only a small amount of whole grains.
- Even products labeled "100% whole grain" can be high in added sugars, such as certain types of granola.

TERMINOLOGY

WHOLE WHEAT

The words "whole" or "brown" are added to grains that are sold both as refined and whole, like wheat or rice. If the wheat has been processed, it's often called "enriched."

MULTI-GRAIN

This means more than one type of grain is used, like corn, oats, or rice. However, "multi-grain" doesn't always mean the grains are whole.

Whenever you can, choose whole grains in their least processed form.

TIPS:

- Cooking whole grains at home also gives you more control over added ingredients, helping reduce added sugars and salt.
- Quinoa, barley, and millet are sold in their whole form.
- CHOOSE oat groats or steel-cut oats instead of instant oatmeal.
- COOK brown rice instead of white rice.