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Breads, Cereals, Rice and Pasta: The Grain Products Group¹

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**Choose 6 to 11 servings every day.
Choose whole-grains frequently.**

What counts as one serving?

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal
- ½ cup of cooked cereal, rice or pasta
- ½ hamburger bun, English muffin or bagel
- 1 small roll, biscuit or muffin
- 3 to 4 small crackers or 2 large crackers

You need at least 6 servings of grain products in your diet and 3 to 5 of those servings should be whole grain products, so choose whole-grains frequently.

- Breads, cereals, rice, and pasta form the base of the Food Guide Pyramid.
- They contribute starch (complex carbohydrates), several B vitamins, minerals, and protein to a balanced diet. Whole grains

are also good sources of fiber in addition to providing starch. Whole grains also provide folate, magnesium, and phosphorus in addition to the nutrients found in enriched products.

- Dietary fiber provides bulk to the diet and helps to move waste through the intestinal system, so it helps prevent and treat constipation and some conditions that irritate the bowel. Some types of fiber help prevent constipation, and other kinds may help lower blood cholesterol.

Eat a variety of foods from the Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta Group every day.



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Here is a list of some of the whole-grain and enriched grain products you might use in your meals and snacks.

GRAIN PRODUCTS	
Whole grain**	Enriched
Brown rice	Bagel*
Corn tortillas	Cornmeal
Graham crackers	Crackers*
Oatmeal	English muffins*
Popcorn	Farina
Pumpernickel bread	French bread
Ready-to-eat cereals	Grits
Rye bread & crackers	Hamburger & hot dog buns*
Whole-wheat bread, rolls, crackers	Italian bread
Whole-wheat pasta	Macaroni
Whole-wheat cereals	Noodles
	Pancakes & Waffles*
	Pretzels
	Ready-to-eat cereals
	Rice spaghetti
<p>*Read the label. Whole-grain versions of many of those products may be available. Lowfat or lowerfat versions may also be available. **Choose at least three servings of whole grain products everyday.</p>	

Be choosy

- To get the fiber you need, choose several servings a day of foods made from whole grains.
- Read the label. Choose most often foods that are made with little fat or sugars.

Increase your fiber intake by eating more of a variety of whole grains, whole-grain products, dry beans, fiber-rich vegetables and fruit.

Adjust your recipes

- Lower the fat and sugar used when you prepare foods at home.

Tips about preparing breads, cereals, rice and pasta

- Cook pasta and rice without salt or fats. Try using unsalted broth or tomato juice to add flavor.
- Try whole-wheat pastas now available at many grocery stores.
- Make a pasta salad for dinner or lunch. It's easy to make and it can put leftovers to good use. Just go easy on the mayonnaise or use reduced-calorie mayonnaise or salad dressing.
- Try whole wheat flour. Substitute a portion of whole-wheat flour for white flour in your recipes.

Fiber is a necessary part of a healthful diet

- Fiber provides help for digesting foods.
- Fiber may reduce cholesterol and lower risk for heart disease.
- Fiber helps protect against some types of cancers.
- Fiber is important to reduce symptoms of chronic constipation, diverticular disease and hemorrhoids.
- Fiber is found only in plant foods like whole-grain breads and cereals, beans and peas, and other vegetables and fruits.
- Because there are different types of fiber in foods, choose a variety of foods daily.
- Some of the health benefits associated with a high-fiber diet may come from other components present in these foods, not just from fiber itself.
- Fiber is best obtained from foods rather than supplements.

Eat plenty of dietary fiber and drink plenty of water.

Buying Tips for the Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta Group:

- Read the label. Choose whole-grain or enriched products for good nutrition. Choose whole grain more often.
- Read the label. Buy plain rice and pasta. Add your own seasonings and sauces.
- Read the label. Buy cereals plain, without added sugar. If you enjoy sweetened cereal, add your own, but use sparingly.
- Read the label. Buy regular-type rice and regular or quick-type oats, grits, and farina. The instant types usually cost much more per serving.
- Read the label. Choose lowfat or lower fat versions of grain products when available.
- Buy cereals in large boxes instead of small, individual packages.
- Look for bargains on day-old bread and bakery products.

Choose foods from each of five food groups

The Food Guide Pyramid illustrates the importance of balance among food groups in a daily eating pattern. Most of the daily servings of food should be selected from the food groups that are the largest in the picture and closest to the base of the Pyramid.

- Choose most of your foods from the grain products group (6-11 servings), the vegetable group (3-5 servings), and the fruit group (2-4 servings).
- Eat moderate amounts of foods from the milk group (2-3 servings) and the meat and bean group (2-3 servings).
- Choose sparingly foods that provide few nutrients and are high in fat and sugars.

Note: A range of servings is given for each food group. The smaller number is for people who consume about 1,600 calories a day, such as many sedentary women. The larger number is for those who consume about 2,800 calories a day, such as active men.

Food Guide Pyramid
A Guide to Daily Food Choices

