

Why Seniors Should Eat Whole Grains for a Healthy Diet

What Are Whole Grains?

Whole grains contain three parts: the bran, the germ and the endosperm. The bran and germ help keep your body healthy, your skin glowing and your hair shiny; all important elements for good senior nutrition. The endosperm contains carbs and proteins. Eating refined or highly processed food only provides your body with the benefits of the endosperm, so it's important to choose natural unprocessed whole grains whenever possible.

Why Eat Whole Grains?

Low energy levels may become common as we get older. Whole grains are a natural energy booster since they contain vital sources of B-vitamins as well as numerous trace minerals like iron, magnesium, copper and zinc. Also, they are rich in nutrients like fiber, which helps to regulate healthy bowel movements and heal the gut. The list doesn't end there. Additional benefits of whole grains for seniors can also include:

- ◆ Reducing the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- ◆ Lowering cholesterol.
- ◆ Preventing certain cancers.
- ◆ Reducing inflammation.
- ◆ Helping with weight management.

How Do You Know If It's Whole-Grain?

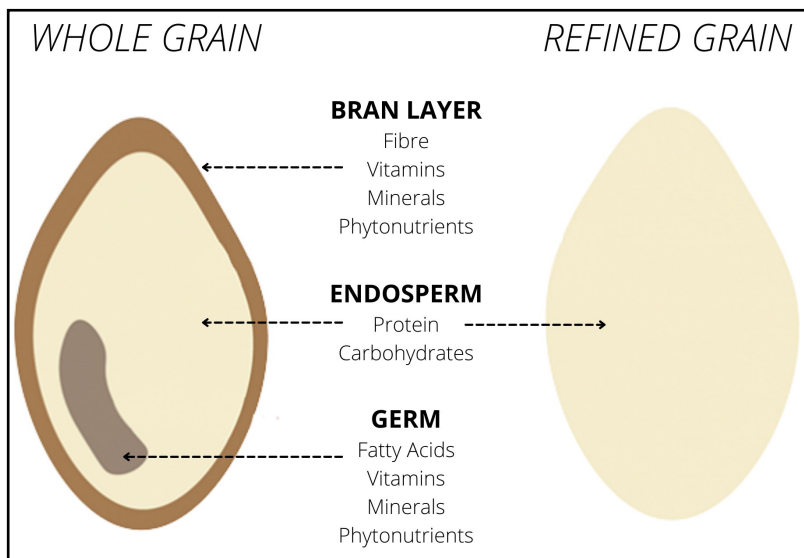
The easiest way to know if a product contains whole grains is to check the nutritional panel on the packaging. Foods that are whole-grain will show higher nutritional content in vitamins, minerals and fiber than refined grains. Whole-grain foods also are much denser in texture and have a shorter shelf life than processed grains. Watch out for common phrases like multigrain, 100% wheat, cracked wheat, organic, pumpernickel, bran and stone-ground. While these terms sound healthy, they don't indicate the product is actually whole-grain.

Color is not always a reliable way to determine whether a product is whole-grain. Molasses or other ingredients are often added to food to give it that nice brown color. Seniors should search for foods that are high in fiber and low in sugar to increase the chances of purchasing true whole-grain products.

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- ◆ Try substituting barley, quinoa or brown rice for noodles in any vegetable soup for a healthy twist.

Also, you can combine whole-grain foods with refined grains you're used to until your palate has adjusted to the whole grains.



Source: <https://www.storypoint.com/why-seniors-should-eat-whole-grains-for-a-healthy-diet/>

Tuna Veggie Casserole

The pasta provides whole grains, while the tuna offers heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, great for senior nutrition. Broccoli and peas are also rich sources of nutrients and antioxidants. **Makes 6 servings.**

Ingredients:

- 1 (12-ounce) bag whole-wheat **CSFP** egg noodles or other noodles
- 2 (5-ounce) cans **CSFP** tuna, drained
- 2 (10 ¾-ounce) cans cream of mushroom soup
- 2 cups any canned **CSFP** veggies, like peas, carrots, or broccoli (or fresh or frozen)
- ½ cup **CSFP** milk
- 1 cup shredded **CSFP** cheese
- 8 buttery crackers, like Ritz

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a 3-quart casserole dish or 13-by-9-inch pan.
2. Cook whole-wheat noodles according to package directions; drain thoroughly.
3. Mix the warm cooked noodles with tuna, soup, veggies, milk, and cheese. Season with salt and pepper as desired (you can add some red pepper

flakes for a kick). Spoon into your prepared pan.

1. Crush up your crackers into small chunks and spread over the top. Feel free to add some more shredded cheese!
2. Bake for 20 minutes until golden, bubbly, and beginning to brown. Serve warm!



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1	Calories 217	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 13.1g	17%	Saturated Fat 6.9g 34% Cholesterol 170mg 57% Sodium 491mg 21% Total Carbohydrate 11.4g 4% Dietary Fiber 1.6g 6% Total Sugars 1.8g Protein 13.5g Vitamin D 18mcg 88% Calcium 165mg 13% Iron 2mg 9% Potassium 331mg 7%

Adapted from: <https://www.aplaceformom.com/caregiver-resources/articles/easy-recipes-for-senior-nutrition>

Snickerdoodle Mug Cake

Ingredients

- ¼ cup + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup **CSFP** milk at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons salted butter melted and cooled
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

For layering/topping:

- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon



Instructions

1. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, and cinnamon until thoroughly, completely combined, with no streaks of any ingredients remaining.

2. Blend in milk, butter, and vanilla until smooth.
3. Into a 14-ounce (or larger) microwave-safe mug with straight sides, scoop a big spoonful of batter, then sprinkle with a spoonful of cinnamon sugar.
4. Alternate layers, ending with cinnamon sugar.
5. Microwave on high for 1 to 1 ½ minutes, or until cake is done to your liking. Allow to cool for a couple of minutes before serving. **Makes 1 serving.**

Notes

A tall, cylindrical mug with straight (not angled) sides will ensure that the cake bakes evenly. I found a 14-ounce mug to be the perfect size to allow the cake to rise up while baking without overflowing. The strength of individual microwaves can vary. Unsalted butter will work just fine in this recipe.

Nutrition Facts

Calories: 500kcal Carbohydrates: 64g Protein: 5g Fat: 25g Saturated Fat: 15g Cholesterol: 66mg Sodium: 228mg Potassium: 181mg Fiber: 1g Sugar: 39g Vitamin A: 800IU Calcium: 112mg Iron: 1.5mg
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<https://www.fivehearthome.com/snickerdoodle-mug-cake/#>

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