

Choosing Whole Grains

Supports: Block — Choosing Whole Grains; KB — Types of Whole Grains

Why It Matters

Grains often get blamed as something to avoid, but the real story is simpler: it is the kind of grain that matters. Whole grains keep all their natural parts — the fiber, vitamins, and minerals — while refined grains have most of that stripped away. That fiber is what makes whole grains more filling, steadier on your energy, and better for your heart and digestion. Switching is not about giving up the foods you love; it is about choosing a more nourishing version of them.

What to Know

Whole vs. refined, in plain terms

A whole grain still has its bran and germ — the parts that carry fiber and nutrients. Refined grains (white bread, white rice, most crackers) have been processed to remove them, which is why they digest fast and leave you hungry sooner.

Easy whole grains to try

- Oats — for breakfast, or stirred into other dishes.
- Brown or wild rice, and quinoa, in place of white rice.
- Whole-grain or 100% whole-wheat bread and pasta.
- Popcorn — an actual whole grain, and a great snack.
- Barley, farro, and bulgur for soups and bowls.

Label trick: For a true whole grain, the word “whole” should be the first ingredient — as in “whole wheat flour.” “Wheat flour” or “enriched flour” on its own usually means refined. You cannot always tell by color, so the ingredient list is your friend.

Try This

Pick one swap to try this week.

? Which refined grain do you eat most, and what whole-grain version could replace it?

? Which new whole grain above are you curious to try?