

# Nutrition

# UPDATE

## For Wholesome Eating, Don't Go Against The Grain

(NAPSA)—Food for thought: Scientists say there are many clinically demonstrated and potential health benefits in what you eat. Not only are new food products being developed to help keep you healthy, more and more Americans are discovering the health benefits of many traditional foods.

“Bread, for example, has long been known as the staff of life. Bread is a functional food that contains a variety of nutrients and tastes great,” said Judi Adams, MS, RD. “Both whole and enriched grains contain numerous benefits the public may not fully realize.”

### Grains' Gains

Take a look at a few of the ways certain foods may do you good:

- Whole grains are a natural and important source of antioxidants and fiber including B vitamins, vitamin E, magnesium and iron, among others. As part of a healthy diet, whole grains may reduce the risks associated with heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and obesity.

- Foods made of wheat, rye, oat and other enriched grains and flours provide a low-fat, low-calorie and nutritious source of essential carbohydrates.

- Enriched white bread is fortified with folic acid, which has been proven to reduce the occurrence of neural tube defects. In fact, enriched grains are the primary source of folic acid in Americans' diets and, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have been credited with lowering the rate of certain birth defects by 34 percent or more.

- Folic acid, added to enriched grains at twice the amount of what's found in whole grains, is



**Nutrition scientists have discovered how to fortify bread with omega-3's to promote heart health and calcium for bone health.**

the key source of iron and fiber in children's diets.

- Food enriched with folic acid has also been linked to decreasing the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, Alzheimer's disease and some cancers.

### More Good News

As science and technology continue to advance, new ways to bake extra goodness into bread are being discovered. The popularity of whole grain products and blends has encouraged hundreds of new products in the past few years.

These new bread products pack in more nutrients than ever before through unique grain combinations and increased fortification. For example, some breads are fortified with omega-3's, which have been linked to heart health; calcium, which is beneficial for bone health; and various kinds of fiber. Bread bakers have even created gluten-free breads for people with celiac disease and other wheat allergies.

Additionally, the Grain Foods Foundation reports that innovations such as white whole wheat flour have led to breads that have

the look and texture of white bread but all the additional nutrients of whole grain flour. White whole wheat gives consumers who love the taste of classic white bread all the additional nutrients found in whole grain.

### Doing Your Part

Registered dietitian Sylvia Meléndez-Klinger, RD, MS, LD, NCSF suggests four food types that can help you stay healthy:

1. Fruits, vegetables and grains such as blueberries, grapes, citrus, carrots, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, broccoli and spinach provide antioxidants that may benefit the heart and reduce cancer risk.

2. Fiber-rich foods (especially soluble fiber) may help lower blood cholesterol and offer protection from heart disease. Soluble fiber (fiber that dissolves in water) is found in oatmeal, oat bran, rice, wheat bran, barley, canned or cooked dried beans (such as kidney and pinto beans), and many fruits and vegetables.

3. Soybeans and soy products such as soy milk, tofu, tempeh, and soy burgers may contain nutrients that promote heart health. They have an ability to help lower total cholesterol and LDLs (the bad cholesterol).

4. Fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids may reduce the risk of heart disease. The American Heart Association recommends two weekly servings of fatty fish, such as tuna or salmon.

### Learn More

For more information about the benefits of grain foods, visit [www.grainpower.org](http://www.grainpower.org); write the Grain Foods Foundation, 490 Bear Cub Drive, Ridgway, CO 81432; or call (970) 626-5183.