

Women's Health

Moms Require Energy And Nutrition Fit For An Athlete

(NAPSA)—Moms let their inner athletes shine through from the minute they step out of bed in the morning to the moment they turn in for the night. Career, household, children, community responsibilities—they tackle it all on a daily basis. A nationwide survey found that 70 percent of moms believe that all of the activity they pack into each and every day makes them similar to athletes. Since good nutrition is vital to an athlete's performance, it may be time for moms to begin thinking about food as fuel for their busy lives.

By choosing foods rich in energy and nutrients, moms can ensure a strong finish at day's end. Grain-based foods such as crackers and tortillas made from enriched white flour, and bread and cereal made from whole grains, provide important vitamins and minerals such as B vitamins and iron, and pack a powerful energy punch. The B vitamins also help to convert food to energy, another way that grains work to increase a woman's endurance.

The health-promoting properties of grains are many, but they can benefit moms in different ways at different life stages.

For pregnant moms, folic acid is essential to the proper development of the baby's spine. Enriched white flour contains twice the folic acid of whole grains. Boomer moms can also benefit from folic acid, as recent research suggests folic acid may help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and heart disease.

The high-fiber content of whole grains has a number of health applications. Fiber has been shown to aid in weight management, so moms trying to lose post-



Grain-based foods provide important vitamins and minerals, such as B vitamins and iron, to give an extra energy boost.

baby weight may reap this particular benefit. Pregnant moms, often afflicted with constipation, should consider whole grains for their insoluble fiber content, which promotes regularity. Additionally, whole grain consumption has been shown to lower the risk of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and some cancers.

Moms can get the nutrition training they deserve through the Wheat Foods Council's ongoing education campaign, Mom, the Everyday Athlete. Moms can download free resources containing facts about grains and wheat, snack and meal tips and customized information for moms at different stages of life at www.wheatfoods.org. Moms' athletic qualities are also being acknowledged through an online search for one mom who exemplifies the "everyday athlete." Entries must be submitted by May 31, 2006.