

KEYS TO BETTER HEALTH™

Whole Grains for the Holidays

Mashed potatoes, dressing, and gravy oh my. Thinking about the holidays is often synonymous with heavy, indulgent dishes—but it doesn't have to be. Since the holidays extend beyond a single day for many of us, it's important that our dishes taste decadent but also provide key nutrients to our daily diets.

Many holiday sides and treats are bread or grain-based. Easily add a boost of nutrition to your holiday season by replacing some of the enriched, white flour and bread with whole grains. Whether it's a baked good or a savory side, whole grains are a simple way to add dietary fiber, B vitamins, and minerals such as iron and magnesium to your meals and overall holiday season.



Whole Grain Side Dishes

Adding whole grains to your savory side dishes can be as elaborate or as simple as you wish. Replace the often-used enriched white bread in your dressing or stuffing with sturdier (and often better tasting) whole grain bread cubes. Use whole grain brown or wild rice in place of white rice in pilafs, stir fry's, or salads. Offer soups made with barley, brown and wild rice, or whole grain noodles as a starter. Finally, add whole grain dinner rolls and crackers to your table spread.

Baking with Whole Grain Flours

Baked goods are all around during the holiday seasons. From fresh bread to warm cookies out of the oven, there are many opportunities to add whole grains to your day simply by baking with whole grain flours.

If you're whipping up a sturdier baked good for your holiday table, such as bread or pizza dough, a general rule of thumb is to replace at least 50% (up to 100%) of the all-purpose flour with regular or white whole-wheat flour. When baking goods that require a lighter texture, such as cookies, cakes, or pie crusts, replace up to 50% of the all-purpose flour with whole-wheat pastry flour¹.

Whole Grains All Day Long

If you're not up for changing your holiday menu or baked goods with the addition of whole grains this season, have no fear. Adding whole grains to your other eating occasions can be just as effective. Enjoy whole grain granola with your morning yogurt or start the day with a hearty bowl of oatmeal. Eat whole grain bread at lunch or serve whole grain pasta at dinner. The overall goal is to make at least half of your daily grains, whole grain².

Keys to Better Health™ offers a nutrition shelf-edge labeling program, which makes it easy for you to quickly identify healthy choices regardless of what diet you follow. When you're in our store, be on the lookout for our nutrition tags

Resources:

1. Fraser, S. How to Bake with Whole-Wheat Flour. Eating Well website. http://www.eatingwell.com/healthy_cooking/healthy_cooking_101_basics_and_techniques/how_to_bake_with_whole_wheat_flour. Accessed July 21, 2016.
2. All about the grains group. Choose My Plate website. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/grains>. Updated March 28, 2016. Accessed July 21, 2016.



Disclaimer: This information is intended for educational purposes only and does not replace advice from your doctor or health care provider. For individual recommendations, please consult with a doctor or registered dietitian.