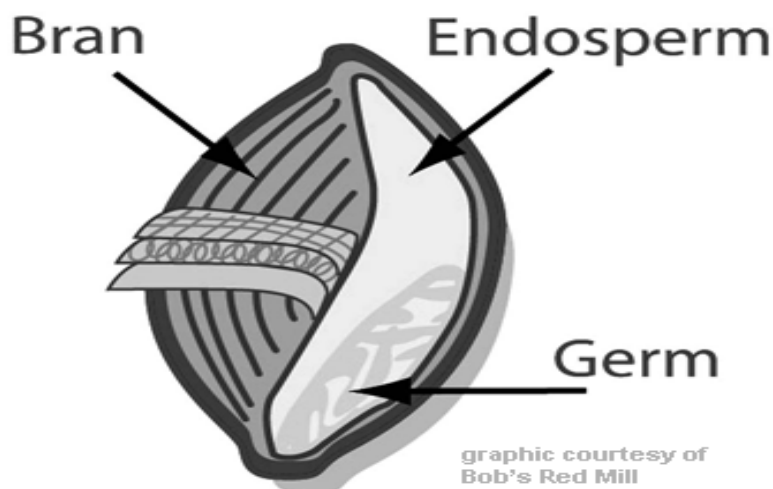


What are Whole Grains?

In their natural state growing in the fields, whole grains are the entire seed of a plant. This seed (which industry calls a "kernel") is made up of three key parts: the bran, the germ, and the endosperm.



The **bran** is the multi-layered outer skin of the kernel, and is tough enough to protect the other two parts of the kernel from assaults by sunlight, pests, water, and disease. It contains important antioxidants, B vitamins and fiber.

The **germ** is the embryo which, if fertilized by pollen, will sprout into a new plant. It contains many B vitamins, some protein, minerals, and healthy fats.

The **endosperm** is the germ's food supply, which provides essential energy to the young plant so it can send roots down for water and nutrients, and send sprouts up for sunlight's photosynthesizing power. The endosperm is by far the largest portion of the kernel. It contains starchy carbohydrates, proteins and small amounts of vitamins and mine

Whole grains contain all three parts of the kernel. Refining normally removes the bran and the germ, leaving only the endosperm. Without the bran and germ, about 25% of a grain's protein is lost, along with at least seventeen key nutrients. Processors add back some vitamins and minerals to enrich refined grains, so refined products still contribute valuable nutrients. But whole grains are healthier, providing more protein, more fiber and many important vitamins and minerals.



The Chicago Partnership for Health Promotion is funded by the USDA Food Stamp Program to encourage Chicago families to make healthier food choices, learn to prepare and consume healthier foods every day and be more physically active. The University of Illinois at Chicago Neighborhoods Initiative is the Land Grant Administrative Hub for CPHP. The USDA, UIC and CPHP are equal opportunity providers and employers. For more information about partnership or CPHP programs in your community, contact CPHP at 312-355-3659. www.cphp.uic.edu

Identifying Whole Grain Products

First, check the package label. Many whole grain products will say so outright. Look for claims like "100% whole wheat" as producers sometimes print "whole grain" on products containing very small amounts of whole grains.

Words you may see on packages	What they mean
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• whole grain• whole wheat• whole [other grain]• stoneground whole [grain]	<i>Grain is as whole as possible, so you're getting all the nutrients of the whole grain.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• unbleached flour• wheat flour• semolina• durum wheat• organic unbleached flour• enriched flour• degerminated (on corn meal)• multigrain (may describe several whole grains or several refined grains, or a mix of both)	<i>These words are accurate descriptions of the package contents, but because the word "whole" is missing, you are likely missing the benefits of "whole grains."</i>

Second, check the list of ingredients. If the first ingredient listed contains the word "whole" (such as "whole wheat flour" or "whole oats"), it is safe to assume the product is predominately whole grain. If only the second ingredient listed is a whole grain, the product may contain as little as 1% or as much as 49% whole grain (in other words, it could contain a little bit of whole grain, or nearly half). This is one of the problems with food labels as they currently exist, and the reason why a new Whole Grain Stamp that accurately states the amount of whole grain will be a valuable aid for consumers.

Check the fiber content in the Nutrition Facts panel. A true 100% whole grain product will have at least 2 grams of fiber per serving and often 4-5 grams or more.

Have you tried a variety of whole grains?
Check out the two tables of common and other grains, which ones have you tried? Which ones are new to you? Which ones will you try soon?

Common Types of Whole Grains

	<u>Have tried</u>	<u>Will try</u>
Brown rice (regular, quick)		
Oatmeal, whole or rolled oats (regular, quick, instant)		
Pearl barley		
Popcorn		
Whole wheat		
Wild rice		

Other Types of Whole Grains

	<u>Have Tried</u>	<u>Will Try</u>
Amaranth		
Buckwheat, kasha or buckwheat groats		
Cracked wheat (bulgur)		
Kamut		
Millet		
Quinoa		
Spelt		
Triticale		
Whole grain corn or cornmeal (yellow and white)		
Whole rye		



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