

SMALL BITES FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Small Bites Lesson 5: Whole Grains

THIS WEEK'S LESSON OVERVIEW:

This week in class your student learned that it can be very difficult to tell the difference between whole grains and refined grains based on appearance alone. The first thing you should do to determine if something is whole grain is check the product's ingredient list. The first ingredient listed should

always be a whole grain. Certain foods will contain words like "multi-grain," "stone-ground," or "100% wheat." While these words might sound healthy, they do not mean the product is actually made from whole grains.

WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME:

WHOLE GRAINS are better for you than refined grains because these grains contain the entire grain kernel which is where all of the grain's healthy nutrients are stored. Examples of whole grains include: whole wheat flour, bulgur (cracked wheat), oatmeal, whole cornmeal, brown rice.

REFINED GRAINS are not as healthy as whole grains because the grains undergo a refining, or milling process that removes the bran, or kernel from the grain. While this process makes the grain very smooth and fine, it unfortunately removes the grain's fiber, iron, and Vitamin B therefore completely getting rid of all the healthy nutrients! Examples of refined grains include: white flour, white bread, white rice, white pasta.

WHY SHOULD YOU EAT WHOLE GRAINS? Eating whole grains provides your body with important sources of fiber, B Vitamins, and other key minerals

- Fiber helps reduce blood cholesterol levels, and may also decrease the risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. Fiber is also known to improve bowel function by reducing constipation and can assist with weight management by helping you feel fuller longer.
- B Vitamins play a key role in helping your body's metabolism and is essential to your nervous system health.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES & TABLE TALK

Pick one day each week to engage in these fun healthy eating activities and use these healthy discussion questions to get the dinner table conversations started!

BREAKFAST TOASTS!

Have your kids make breakfast fun by creating their own unique whole grain breakfast toast. Fun toast ideas include: peanut butter, banana and honey or avocado, tomato, and scrambled egg.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Open a bag of whole grain flour and place 1/2 cup in a ziploc bag. Open a bag of white refined flour and place 1/2 cup in a separate ziploc bag. Show your kids the two baggies and have them compare and contrast and write down 3 observations about what they see. Next, have them open the bags and feel the difference between the two flours. Ask them to explain the differences between white and whole grain flour.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the process of how a whole grain becomes a refined grain.
2. Compare different food labels between products that are whole grain vs. refined grains.

Common Threads is a non-profit bringing health and wellness to children, families, and communities through cooking and nutrition education.

Your child's teacher is teaching our Small Bites lessons on healthy snacks and nutrition. As a part of this program, these parent newsletters are being sent home to share what your student is learning and give them a chance to share healthy information with the family!



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KIDS ACTIVITY

5

WHOLE GRAINS

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JOIN THE COMMON THREADS FAMILY!

Join Common Threads to help your student make healthy choices at school and at home!

1. Go to www.commonbytes.org, make a free account and explore healthy and affordable recipes.
2. Sign up for healthy reminders via text message from Common Threads by texting @CThreads to 81010. Standard messaging rates apply.
3. Check with your student's school to sign-up for Common Threads Family Cooking Classes and Parent Workshops! Not offered at your school? Help us bring them to you by emailing classes@commonthreads.org.



BYE BYE REFINED. HELLO WHOLE GRAIN.

KIDS! SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW!

Test your whole grain knowledge!

Directions: Look at the different grains below and circle the images that are WHOLE grains. Take it a step further and look in your pantry and fridge to see if you have any of the circled items in your home. If you do, place a smiley face on top of the image!



Brown Rice



White Pasta



Quinoa



Oats



White Bread



Whole Wheat Flour

How many Whole Grains did you circle? Write down your answer in the box below: