



What About Heart Health?

Heart disease is a serious disease. It's the second-leading cause of death in Canada. Research shows that adding just three to five servings of whole grains per day is not only nutritious and easy, it can lower your risk.



Learn more about whole grains and the ways you can reduce your risk.

BENEFITS OF WHOLE GRAINS



Whole grain foods, including those made with wheat, are high in dietary fibre which decreases cholesterol absorption. High cholesterol levels in our blood can create blockages in our blood vessels and heart.

Eating a diet rich in whole grains and dietary fibre can help decrease blood pressure, preventing our heart from working harder than it needs to pump blood around our bodies. High blood pressure is a risk factor for heart disease.



Whole grains help improve glucose and insulin responses in our blood which, if not managed properly, can increase your risk of heart disease. The high dietary fibre intake from whole grains also reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, a risk factor for heart disease.

WHAT IS CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a fat found in blood that is naturally made by our bodies and it can also be found in animal-based foods. High cholesterol levels in our blood can lead to plaque build-up: sticky, fatty deposits on the walls of blood vessels that narrow the artery, restrict blood flow and ultimately lead to heart disease.

THE HEART FACTS

Every hour **12** Canadians over the age of **20** die from heart disease.



While there are some forms of **heart disease** present at birth, other types develop as we age.

A healthy dietary pattern plays a key role in reducing the risk of heart disease. In fact, **8 in 10** cases of heart disease and stroke are preventable through healthy lifestyle behaviours.¹

¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22649266/>



REDUCING THE RISK

Research found that people who consume three to five servings of whole grains per day have a lower risk of cardiovascular disease¹. **What does three to five servings of wheat look like in a day?**

¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22649266/>

PEANUT PASTA BOWL



BREAKFAST

- A whole grain waffle with blueberries and yogurt

OR

- One slice of whole wheat toast with an egg and some fruit



LUNCH

- Tabouli salad made with bulgur wheat and fresh vegetables

OR

- Whole wheat pita or tortilla with chicken, tuna or grilled vegetables



SUPPER

- Peanut pasta bowl – whole wheat pasta (like spaghetti), thinly sliced vegetables, tofu or chicken and peanut sauce

OR

- Whole grain pizza with sauce, cheese and vegetables



FINDING WHOLE GRAINS

Find high fibre whole grains by reading ingredient lists. For example, look for “**whole grain whole wheat**” as the first ingredient on breads, crackers, tortillas, or pitas.

Choose a variety of fibre-rich foods to benefit from a range of **insoluble**, **soluble** and **fermentable** fibres.

Look for packaged foods labeled “**high fibre**”, which means it contains at least **4 g** of fibre per serving, or “**very high fibre**” which contains at least **6 g**.

Whole grains are naturally higher in dietary fibre. Adding lots of dietary fibre quickly can cause gas and bloating. Give your body a chance to adjust by adding in a little bit of dietary fibre at a time.

Opt for whole grain, whole wheat options when it comes to your staples — whole grain pasta, couscous or bread. These choices contain nutritional components such as dietary fibre, resistant starch and B vitamins adding vitamins and minerals your diet.



For more great resources visit whataboutwheat.ca