



The Wellness Family

Drs. Daniel, Susi and Claudia Keep You Informed

All About Grains

Back in 1992, the United States Food and Drug Administration (USDA) first released the Food Guide Pyramid. At that time, grains, such as bread and cereal, along with rice and pasta were the base of that pyramid with the highest daily recommended servings of 6 to 11 per day. In 2011, the USDA made a drastic change from the pyramid to "My Plate".

Suddenly, they were no longer recommending that the majority of your food be grain-based, but instead that half of your plate be fruits and vegetables and the other half be split between grains and lean meats. That is a substantial change in the recommended daily servings of grains, and rightfully so.

Good Grains

All grains are not equal. Before deciding which grains to consume, it's important to understand that some are better for you than others.

While grains should never represent a large part of your diet, there are grains that have some nutritional value and benefits. These grains are called "Ancient or Heritage Grains" and include quinoa, amaranth, barley, teff, millet, sorghum and others. These particular grains are called "Ancient Grains" or "Heritage Grains" because they are considered to have been left unchanged by genetic modifying or deviations in planting and growing practices.

From quinoa to sorghum, these grains are loaded with vitamins and proteins. Rich in omega-3s and B-vitamins and zinc, these grains are going to be a healthy addition to your diet when eaten in moderation.

Why Moderation

Even the healthier grain choices are not going to be as rich in vitamins, minerals and healthy fats as your other food options. For instance, leafy green vegetables are rich powerhouses of vitamins and minerals. Lean meats such as fish and poultry are chock full of important vitamins, minerals and protein. The problem with grains is that they tend to make up the lion share of the western diet, leaving little room for the foods that will provide the greatest amount of nutrition.

Since grains tend to expand in the stomach, it takes a lot less grains to feel full which results in even less nutrients being absorbed by the body.

Not-so-Good Grains

Just as there are good grains, there are also grains that aren't so good. While not really bad, per se, they are typically lacking

in any nutritional value; such as the most commonly produced and consumed grains: corn, rice and wheat. While they are the most popular they are the least healthy. Lacking in almost all nutritional value, they have become a staple in the western diet.

In half the world, bread provides more than 50% of the average person's daily caloric intake. In Southern Asia, Central America, the Far East and Africa, cereal products make up sometimes 80% or more of the total caloric intake.

Diets based primarily on grains tend to be low or completely deficient in vitamin B12. Since it is related to megaloblastic anemia that results in cognitive dysfunction and an increase risk for arterial vascular disease and thrombosis, a diet lacking in this vitamin is decidedly unhealthy.



It's important to understand that not all grains are created equal.

Leaky Gut Link

Leaky gut syndrome is a condition that occurs when gaps develop between the cells that make up the lining of the intestinal wall. These tiny gaps can allow substances such as undigested food, waste and bacteria to escape the digestive tract and leak into the bloodstream.

Leaky gut is often associated with inflammatory bowel diseases such as Crohn's, ulcerative colitis or celiac disease but even people without a diagnosed bowel disorder may have leaky gut syndrome to one varying degree or another.

According to a growing number of experts, including Dr. Loren Cordain, a professor at Colorado State University and an expert on Paleolithic lifestyles, and despite the USDA recommending a daily intake of grains, humans were not designed to eat grains; doing so may actually be causing leaky gut syndrome.

Dr. Cordain believes that every nutritional requirement can be met with other food sources and that it is possible to be healthy and nourished without any grains consumed. He has even expressed concerns that the high-fiber bran portion of grain, the part that actually makes it a whole grain, contains

anti-nutrients which may be pro-inflammatory, create immunotoxicity, neurotoxicity, excitotoxicity, cytotoxicity, cardiotoxicity and may disrupt endocrine function.

Should you choose to make grains a part of your diet then remember to do so in moderation. Grains should not be consumed daily and should not take up a quarter of your plate at each meal. The fiber, vitamins, minerals, protein and other nutritional content found in grains needed to meet the nutritional needs of your family can be found, in abundance, in vegetables and lean meats.

Natural vs Organic

Since it's not suggested that grains be avoided altogether, it's important to understand that not all grains are created equal. As with all consumption choices, it's important to read labels and understand what you're reading.

The terms "natural" and "organic" are not interchangeable. They are decidedly different and mean two completely different things in regards to their content.

Products labeled "100% Organic" are just that and must contain only organically grown and produced contents. A label that says "Certified Organic" is actually going to contain up to 5% of non-organic, synthetic, modified or some other form of un-natural ingredients. Finally, there are labels that say, "Made with Organic Ingredients," and it's basically exactly what it says, just 70 to 95% of the ingredients are organic.

So, what does the term "natural" mean? "Natural" may mean any of the following: the producer used toxic pesticides or genetically engineered ingredients or carcinogenic fumigants or chemical solvents. It does **not** mean "non-GMO" and it doesn't mean "organic" or that it was grown without pesticides and other chemicals.

Unfortunately, according to a 2010 Hartman Group poll, 60% of consumers believe that "natural" on the label means there are no GMO ingredients in the product and this isn't the case.

Recommended Diet

If considering a change for your family that will reduce the amount of grains consumed, then consider the Paleo Diet. Basic in its recommendations, the Paleo Diet says to eat natural and don't eat processed. Foods that are packaged are typically processed. The less the packaging the more natural the foods. A great rule of thumb is to only purchase around the outside of your general market (fresh meat and produce).

Only eat grass-fed meats, fish/seafood, fresh fruits and veggies, eggs, nuts and seeds, and healthful oils (coconut, olive, walnut, flaxseed, macadamia, avocado, etc.) while avoiding grains, legumes (including peanuts), dairy, refined sugar, potatoes, salt, refined or hydrogenated oils and all processed foods.

Chiropractic Factor

Your Family Wellness Chiropractor wants your family to be whole and healthy. A proper diet is a vital part of living the wellness lifestyle. If you're curious about how healthy you're eating and feeding your family then consider keeping a dietary journal for one week. Bring it to your next adjustment and ask your doctor to give you their opinion.

It is not unheard of to be eating something that you thought was healthy, only to find out that it may be inadvertently triggering an inflammatory response or an allergic reaction. An immune response to a food item may result in various symptoms so talk to your Family Wellness Chiropractor about your diet today.



*Dear Patient,
Drs. Daniel, Susi and Claudia are dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. So take a moment today to discuss with your Family Wellness Chiropractor any concerns you may have regarding your family's overall health and wellness.*

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