

Common names

Soluble and insoluble fiber, wholegrain, multigrain, refined grains, carbohydrates and complex carbohydrates

What are starches and grains?

A whole grain is the entire grain—which includes the bran, germ and endosperm (starchy part). They are a source of iron, magnesium, selenium, B vitamins, and dietary fiber.

Starches are refined grains which have been processed to remove the bran and germ.

Where do I get whole grains?

Wholegrain breads, wholegrain cereals, brown rice, wholegrain pasta, oats, oat bran, whole-wheat flour, wheat bran, corn bran, whole grain corn meal, rice bran, wild rice, barley, quinoa, millet and whole rye.

Where do I get starches?

Starchy vegetables such as peas, corn, butternut squash, potato, sweet potato, yams, plantain, pumpkin, acorn squash, cassava, parsnips, dried beans and peas, refined grains such as white rice, white pasta or white bread.

Recommended intake

The recommended intake of dietary fiber is 14g per 1000 calories or 19g for 2–3 year-olds, 25g children and adult women and 35g teens and adult men.

Benefits of whole grains

- Provides energy, B Vitamins and Fiber
- Reduces plasma total and LDL (low-density lipoprotein) cholesterol
- Lowers the risk of heart disease
- Reduces blood pressure
- Reduces the risk of cancers of the digestive system
- Reduces or manages diabetes, weight and promotes bulky stools

Benefits of starches

- Provide energy and soluble fiber from starchy vegetables

What happens if I get too much refined starches?

- Excess intake can lead to overweight or obesity
- Excess intake in some people may lead to hard bowel movements

What happens if I do not get enough whole grains?

- Constipation
- Poorly controlled blood sugars and cholesterol
- Possible vitamin/mineral deficiencies
- Remember, as you increase the amount of fiber in your diet, you must also increase your water intake. Failure to do so can lead to hard stools.
- Choose whole grains or starchy vegetables with each meal
- Make half your grains whole grains