

## GRAINS FOR YOUR BRAIN

### Key Messages

- As consumers, we are on the receiving end of increasingly conflicting advice when it comes to food, especially grain foods. Eat them. Avoid them. Eat only certain ones. Eat them only at certain times. Then there are all the new varieties of grains available to try. But what are they? And how do you prepare them? How do you even pronounce them?
  - All of this contradictory information has left consumers confused about what they eat and what they feed their families. And it has left many people vulnerable to messages about grain foods and healthful eating that simply don't stand the test of science.
  - What we need is straight talk about grain foods as one part of an overall healthful, active lifestyle.
- *GrainsForYourBrain.org is a new resource featuring the most up-to-date information on grain foods and our bodies that cuts through the gossip to provide common sense and health-expert-backed strategies for living well.*
  - The new site features articles, videos, recipes and meal plans from leading experts in nutrition, exercise, brain science, heart health, diabetes, mom and baby health, and food science.
  - GrainsForYourBrain.org will help anyone eat smart and think right about our favorite staple: grains.
  - Common grains found in the American diet are wheat, rye, barley, rice and oats. Foods made from these (and other) grains include bread, pasta, tortillas, bagels, crackers and cereal. Regardless of its form, each grain food product provides essential nutrients that are part of a balanced diet.
- So, what does the science tell us? Grain foods have a key role in a balanced, healthful diet.
  - The Dietary Guidelines for Americans — the gold standard of science-based nutrition advice in the United States — call for the average healthy American adult consuming 2,000 calories/day to include six one-ounce servings of grain foods daily, making at least half of these whole grain foods.
  - Grain foods, both whole and enriched, provide essential nutrients the body needs. Whole grains are a source of fiber, magnesium, antioxidants and vitamin E.
  - Enriched grains provide B vitamins, iron and folic acid, a B vitamin that is crucial for the prevention of neural tube birth defects.
- Beyond fueling us up to be our best, grain consumption has been shown to have positive effects on brain function. Here's how grain foods may help your brain.

- As part of an overall healthful eating pattern, specifically one that follows the principles of the Mediterranean diet, consuming whole grain foods has been shown to positively impact cognitive function.<sup>1-6</sup>
- Consumption of dietary fiber and B vitamins found in grain foods is associated with better cognitive health.<sup>7-9</sup>
- Folic acid fortification of enriched grain foods has been shown to be a cost effective method of improving cognitive health and brain development in utero.<sup>10-14</sup>

### Elevator Speech (Or What You'd Tell a Neighbor Who Asks You about *Grain Brain* or other Fad Diets)

In a world of extremes, the Grain Foods Foundation is a voice for common sense. Most experts agree on the following points:

- All foods fit can fit into a well-balanced diet and that we can and should get our nutrients from foods first.
- Extreme diets — including those promising to cure or prevent disease — are neither healthful nor sustainable and could potentially be problematic in the future.
- Before stepping into a regimented diet program, health care professionals should be consulted.

## Q/A for Grains for Your Brain Launch

### About Grains for Your Brain and Grain Foods Foundation

#### **Q: What is Grains for Your Brain?**

Grains for Your Brain is a new online resource featuring the most up-to-date information on grains and our bodies that cuts through the clutter to provide common sense and health-expert-backed strategies for living well.

#### **Q: Why was this microsite created?**

There is a lot of conflicting advice out there concerning what to eat and how to eat to stay healthy and enjoy all that life has to offer. All of this contradictory information has left people confused about how to incorporate healthy grain foods into what they eat and what they feed their families. And it has left many people vulnerable to messages about grains and healthful eating that simply don't stand the test of science.

#### **Q: Is this site in direct competition with the book *Grain Brain*? [If probed]**

The study of what we eat and how it impacts our bodies is long and complicated. There is no shortage of books, diet products, diet programs, supplements, fads and trends all promising to help people lose weight, achieve wellness and avoid scary health conditions.

In fact, according to recent reports from John LaRosa at Marketdata and the National Weight Control Registry, diet and weight-loss industry products such as books account for approximately \$20 billion in sales annually, with approximately 108 million people attempting to follow some sort of diet.

All this noise has created mass confusion among consumers and experts alike concerning what to feed our bodies. Grains for Your Brain takes a holistic look at one of our staple foods — grains — which have been demonized by some, to provide scientifically supported, common sense information about this vital component of the human diet.

**Q: Is there truth to the warnings that eating grain foods will give me a scary disease and weight gain?**

The human diet is so complex that trying to associate one single food, especially a staple food like grain that has been a vital part of the human diet for millennia, with single diseases or weight gain in general should be viewed with a healthy dose of suspicion. In fact, we know grain foods provide many of the essential vitamins, nutrients and compounds that everyone needs to be healthy and stay active for the long term.

**Q: What does the science show about grain and brain health?**

As part of an overall healthful eating pattern, including the Mediterranean diet, it's been shown that consuming whole grain foods positively impacts cognitive function. Additionally, consumption of dietary fiber and B vitamins found in grain foods is associated with better cognitive health. Folic acid fortification of enriched grain foods has also been shown to be a cost-effective method of improving cognitive health and brain development in utero.

**Q: Why should I believe information from a site that's sponsored by the grain foods industry?**

The information contained on Grains for Your Brain has been sourced from leading experts across many fields of health, nutrition, science, exercise and diet. The site presents their insights and opinions as a whole and welcomes open, honest and respectful dialogue about commonsense approaches to eating and enjoying all foods, not just grain foods.

**Q: Your site makes a lot of statements that go against everything I read in the media about carbs and disease states. How do I know your information is true?**

The information contained on Grains for Your Brain has been sourced from leading experts across many fields of health, nutrition, science, exercise and diet. These experts have dedicated years of study, research and medical practice to better understanding how all foods, not just grain foods, impact the human body.

**Q: Who is the Grain Foods Foundation?**

The Grain Foods Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating people about the important role that grain-based products play in our lives, from providing nutrition to enhancing enjoyment to maintaining traditions.

**Q: Who are the Grain Foods Foundation members?**

The Grain Foods Foundation is supported by a wide coalition of millers, bakers and others who have all dedicated their lives to providing people with delicious products made with the goodness of grains.

**Q: Isn't Grains for Your Brain self-serving if the site is supported by the Grain Foods Foundation?**

Grains for Your Brain is a much-needed resource for people of all walks of life who are interested in nutrition and want to better understand the role that food plays in their bodies from both a physical and an emotional standpoint.

**Q: Aren't the experts on your scientific advisory board paid to say only positive things about grains?**

These experts have dedicated years of study, research and medical practice to better understand how all foods, not just grain foods, impact the human body. Grains for Your Brain is a forum through which they can share these insights with people from all walks of life.

**Q: Does the Grain Foods Foundation lobby?**

The Grain Foods Foundation does not lobby.

**Q: Does the Grain Foods Foundation fund research?**

The Grain Foods Foundation does not currently fund primary research. However, our experts often review and compile research from other sources to help support the information provided on Grains for Your Brain.

About the site

**Q: How often is new content going to be posted?**

The Grain Foods Foundation looks to include new meal plans, recipes, articles and videos monthly to attract new users and keep those interested parties visiting the Grains for Your Brain site on a regular basis.

**Q: Where do you get your recipes from?**

Some of our recipes are provided to us from member companies of the Grain Foods Foundation. Some are created for us by advisory board member Sylvia Melendez-Klinger, a registered dietitian.

**Q: Can I submit recipes?**

Yes, we would love for our investors to submit recipes. Please submit recipes for consideration to Lauren Brennan at [lbrennan@mullen.com](mailto:lbrennan@mullen.com). We ask that meal recipes be under 500 calories and snack recipes fewer than 250 calories. When submitting, feel free to specify how this recipe might work in a meal that follows the principles set forth by MyPlate.

**Q: How are the meal plans structured?**

Each meal in the meal plans contains approximately 500 calories and each snack around 250. The plans are structured to provide about 2,000 calories per day through three meals and two snacks daily. Given that 2,000 calories per day is the average intake used on the Nutrition Facts Panel, our meal plans are designed to meet the calorie needs of an average, healthy adult. Naturally, different populations have different calorie needs, and these meal plans are meant to be customized for individual needs (e.g., if you need fewer calories per day, select only one snack per day rather than two or reduce suggested serving sizes).

### **Q: Who answered the questions?**

Answers to the questions on Grains for Your Brain have been provided by leading experts across many fields of health, nutrition, science, exercise and diet.

### **Q: Where else can I get grain information?**

Our partner organizations are a great resource for information. Please visit their sites via the links below.

[American Bakers Association](#)

[National Association of Wheat Growers](#)

[National Pasta Association](#)

[North American Millers' Association](#)

[U.S. Wheat Associates](#)

[USA Rice Federation](#)

[Wheat Foods Council](#)

[Healthy Grains Institute](#)

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