

RCC NUTRTION CORNER

Going against grains

Carbohydrate-rich foods, especially white bread, pasta, and crackers—are on many hit lists of foods to avoid. While some forego carbohydrate-rich foods because they're allergic to wheat or have gluten sensitivity, others may do so because they think they should avoid them. Many people are afraid to eat carbohydrates and think that carbohydrate-rich foods make you gain weight or are bad for you.

Fiber-rich whole grains—provide your body and brain with glucose, the main fuel needed for energy, as well as B vitamins and antioxidants that can protect health. Most Americans consume less than a 1 ounce-equivalent of whole grains each day instead of 3 or more as recommended in current dietary guidelines (based on a 1,600 to 2,000 calorie meal pattern). **To deliciously increase your intake of whole grains:**

- Choose quick-cooking oats or instant oatmeal (without added sugar), whole grain, high fiber cereal (preferably with little added sugar), and whole wheat pita, bread, or English muffins, or whole grain waffles for breakfast. Using unsweetened applesauce or some natural peanut butter to top a whole grain waffle or toasted whole grain bread, or to mix into oatmeal adds lots of flavor.
- At lunch and dinner, opt for whole grain rice (brown or wild) combined with lightly sauteed vegetables and some protein (like skinless chicken breast or lean beef).
- Try mixing half of your regular pasta with whole wheat pasta and to try different shapes and brands until you find one or two that you like. Add some tomato sauce, lightly sautéed vegetables, and a small amount of parmesan cheese for extra flavor.
- Have popcorn (air-popped with a sprinkle of grated parmesan cheese, or a crunchy whole grain, high fiber cereal mixed with dry fruit and some nuts for a midday snack.

Check out the recipe tray on Debbie's desk for a delicious Quinoa Salad recipe!