

## Myths About Carbohydrates & Grains

Some fad diets claim that carbohydrates are terrible - and they blame grains for everything from arthritis to obesity. With all these claims, it's hard to know what's fact and what's not. If you're on a quest for better health, improved performance and lifetime weight control, here's the straight story about grains.

### **MYTH # 1: Carbohydrates are fattening.**

Not a grain of truth here. Studies show that people who eat more carbohydrates and less fat have an easier time with weight control. By weight, carbohydrates have less than half the calories of fat. Most grain foods are relatively low in calories and naturally low fat.

### **MYTH # 2: Grain foods contain empty calories.**

On the contrary, grains are a great source of fiber as well as folate, thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, zinc, and iron. These nutrients occur naturally in whole grains and are added to enriched products. Some grains, like breads and pasta, are also fortified with calcium.

### **MYTH # 3: Most Americans eat too many grains.**

Not! USDA says that we eat an average of just over six grain servings a day. This is a bare minimum, since the Food Guide Pyramid recommends 6 to 11 servings a day. In fact, nearly 2/3 of Americans do not meet the current recommendations for grain foods.



### **MYTH # 4: Athletes need protein, not carbohydrates.**

High school athletes, soccer moms and weekend warriors need both. Carbs provide the fuel necessary for peak performances and are the preferred source of energy for physical activities. The more active and energetic your lifestyle, the more grains you need.

### **MYTH # 5: I could never eat 6 to 11 servings a day.**

Of course you can! Grain servings are actually much smaller than you may think. A slice of bread, half a hamburger bun, and a medium tortilla all equal one serving. When it comes to cereal (cold or cooked), rice and pasta, one-half cup is a serving.

**MYTH # 6: Grains are boring**

Are you kidding? The incredible variety of grains guarantees tasty eating at every meal. Add adventure to meals and snacks with innovative touches - like deliciously different pizzas with grilled veggies or Mexican beans, salsa and cheese. Enjoy the health benefits of whole grains - with shredded wheat cereals, multi-grains breads and brown rice.

Source: Eat Right Montana