

Ohio SNAP-Ed Adult & Teen Programs Getting to Know Whole Grains

Task Topic: Whole Grains

Task Title: Getting to Know Whole Grains

Teaching Message(s):

- ☒ When consuming grain products like bread, pasta, rice, cereal, etc., choose whole grain products.
- ☒ Use MyPlate to make healthy food choices with a limited budget.
- ☒ Use food labels to make better choices.

Resources: Adapted from *ChooseMyPlate.gov*, *Dietary Guidelines*, the Whole Grain Council

Objectives for the Task:

1. Define what a “whole grain” is.
2. Distinguish between foods that are whole grains and foods that are refined grains.

Materials needed for the Task (including Handouts):

- Fact Sheet – What is a Whole Grain?
- MyPlate wall poster
- 4-5 grocery bags containing packages of whole grain foods (examples include brown rice, whole grain pasta, whole grain crackers, whole wheat cereal, whole wheat bread, etc.). You can also use paper food models.

Food and Equipment for Demonstration and Sampling:

- [None needed for this task]

General Materials List:

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|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| • Flip chart paper | • Post-it notes | • Index cards |
| • Thought box | • Markers | • Pens |
| • Highlighters | • Masking tape | • Name tags |
| • VOICE principles | • Participant evaluation forms | |

Preparation:

- Hang up the MyPlate poster in the front of the room, or in an area visible to everyone.
- Prepare reusable grocery bags with a few simple, healthy whole grains food packages in each. You can also use paper food models for this activity.



Key Points to Review:

- Introduce yourself. Give brief description of the program (program name, length of sessions, duration of program).
- Include your purpose as the facilitator (i.e. to introduce ideas that are supported by research, to give them the tools to make informed decisions about areas that affect their health & nutritional needs, and to identify topics that might be covered based on the curricula used in the program).
- Review the V.O.I.C.E. Principles.
- Ask participants to sign in on the SNAP-Ed sign-in sheet.
- Remember to pass out the appropriate participant evaluation form at the end of the session, making sure to read the questions out loud to the participants.

Transition:

Last time we met, we discussed.... We also Who would like to share an example of ...?

Today we will be talking about what foods are considered whole grains. We'll compare examples of whole grain foods to foods that have been refined, and what the difference is nutritionally.

But before we start, let's begin the lesson by talking about physical activity. Eating whole grain foods helps maintain your blood sugar – why not aid this by being active? Research has shown that for every 2 hours a person watches TV, the risk of type 2 diabetes increases by 14%. Physical activity is an integral part of a healthy lifestyle – make sure you are as healthy as you can be by doing your favorite activities almost every day.

Physical activity guidelines can be found at the following websites:

- Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion: www.health.gov/paguidelines/
- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/index.html>
- President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition: www.fitness.gov/be-active/physical-activity-guidelines-for-Americans/

Anchor

Let's play a word association game. When I say, "whole grains," what is the first thing that pops into your mind? It can be a TYPE of food, or it can be an OPINION you have about whole grain foods. Call out your answers and I will write them on the flip chart paper.

Write down participants' responses. Discuss the collective set of responses – are they mostly positive, or negative?

Add

Direct participants' attention to the MyPlate poster.

Let's take a look at "MyPlate." Notice the Grain group indicated by the orange portion of the plate. Grains fit onto your plate as part of a balanced diet. Notice how a little more than a quarter of your foods consumed in one day should come from grain foods. For the average



person, this is about 6 servings of grains. Within the grains group, though, there is a large variety of food options, some healthier than others.

You may have heard many mixed messages as to what actually qualifies a food as a “whole grain.” In order to understand what a whole grain is, it is important to distinguish between whole grains and refined grains. While these are both considered grain products, their processing determines whether they are “whole” or “refined.”

Pass out a copy of the Fact-sheet: What is a Whole Grain? to each participant.

All grains begin equally, but they are not all processed equally. On the fact sheet I passed out, there is a picture of a grain kernel right after it is picked and prior to processing. The kernel has 3 edible parts: the bran, germ, and endosperm. The bran and germ contain the fiber, vitamins, and minerals that are beneficial to our health. In **whole grains**, 100% of the original kernel – all of the bran, germ, and endosperm – must be present to be considered a whole grain (the **whole** grain!)

A grain is considered **refined** when it has had the nutrient-rich bran and germ layers removed. Often times, refined grains are “enriched,” which means certain nutrients are added back to the food. Food companies do this to increase shelf life and achieve a desired texture; however, many nutrients are lost forever as part of the processing.

The *Dietary Guidelines* recommend that Americans make half their grains whole grains for optimal health. Looking for the words “whole grain” at the top of the ingredients list is one way to identify if a food is whole grain.

How else can you tell if a food is a whole grain food? *(Be ready for color – brown color does NOT always indicate whole grain. The Whole Grain stamp is another way you can tell. Fiber may or may not indicate a whole grain.)*

Apply

Pull out grocery bags with whole grain boxes/labels. Divide the participants into groups of 2 or 3. Each group will practice working with the food packages/labels in their bags.

As we just discussed, it is recommended that you make *at least* half of the grains you eat whole grains. This can be done by substituting the grains you already eat for whole grains and using the food labels to help you choose the right foods.

In your groups, take a grocery bag containing examples of whole grain foods. Take a look at the label and notice the serving size, vitamins, minerals, and fiber on the Nutrition Facts label. Next, look for the word “Whole” in the ingredient list. Of the foods in your bag, pick out one or two and think about how you could incorporate them into the meals you and your families eat, either by adding them into your diet or substituting them for the refined grains you currently eat. How would this help you make half your grains whole grains?

Who would like to share some meal ideas or thoughts your group discussed?



Away

Choose a day or two – or more! – over the next week where you will make half the grains you eat whole grains. Write down what foods you added or substituted to help you reach this goal.

Facilitator's Notes:**Facilitator's Checklist:**

- ☐ Have I gathered all of the pertinent materials needed for the lesson?
- ☐ Did I spend the requisite amount of time covering each targeted message?
- ☐ Did I apply the principles of adult learning to my program?
- ☐ Did I create a comfortable and functional learning atmosphere?
- ☐ Did I fill out a Program Log with the necessary program information?
- ☐ Did I ensure that all participants signed the sign-in sheet?
- ☐ Did I read the survey instrument out loud to the participants?
- ☐ Did I collect all requisite survey instruments needed for today's lesson?

