

[IMAGE]

## **Stick to Heart Healthy**

By Editorial Staff

It's easy to get plenty of grains in your diet - but are they the right kind of grains? The food millions upon millions of Americans increasingly consume every day (the processed type) are more likely to contain refined grains, rather than whole grains. That's an important, often-misunderstood distinction, especially when food manufacturers go out of their way to confuse you. "All Natural" doesn't necessarily mean whole grains, it just means nothing artificial. "Multigrain" just means multiple grains, none of which may be whole.

Let's clear up the confusion when it comes to heart health: Whole grain is your best bet, pure and simple. The more, the better, and research proves it. Case in point: a study that found people who ate more whole grains had a lower risk of developing early heart disease, while people who ate more refined grains had a higher risk.

The study compared healthy individuals (no evidence of heart disease; no narrowing of coronary arteries) with individuals who had at least one sign of early cardiovascular disease (atherosclerotic narrowing of coronary arteries in males under age 55 or in females under age 65). Food questionnaires were utilized to assess all participants' diets, including daily intake of whole vs. refined grains. The more whole grains, the lower the risk of artery narrowing, and vice versa.

Stick to heart healthy! For most people, that means eating 3-6 servings of whole grains a day, every day. What's a serving? Think one slice of bread, a 1/2 cup of cooked rice or pasta, or 1 cup of cereal. [Click here](#) for additional information.

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