

# TAKE CHARGE!



September 2021

## Grains: The Whole Truth

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD



**If you love oatmeal, brown rice and whole-grain bread, you're in luck.** Whole-grain foods are fiber-rich, loaded with vitamins and good for overall health.

**However, most Americans choose refined grains** (such as white bread or white rice) instead of nutrient-dense whole-grain options. What's the difference?

All grains start out whole with three nutrient-dense parts:

- Bran: contains fiber, B vitamins and minerals.
- Germ: contains vitamin E, antioxidants and healthy, unsaturated fats.
- Endosperm: contains carbohydrate with some protein.

**Removing the bran and germ turns a whole grain into a refined grain product, such as white rice and white flour.** The problem? This refining process removes most of the fiber, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and healthful fats from the grains, leaving mostly carbs behind.

**Statistics show that about 80% of consumers think whole grains are healthful.** Yet whole grains only account for about 16% of our total grain intake on any given day. If they are so nutritious, why aren't we eating them more often? It comes down to availability, convenience and habit.

**White bread, pasta, crackers and white rice are readily available at restaurants and grocery stores.** It may take a bit of effort to switch to more whole grains, but it's worth it for their health benefits. Studies show that eating about three daily servings of whole grains may help reduce the risk of developing heart disease, cancer and type 2 diabetes.

**Get more whole grains** by requesting whole-grain bread or brown rice at restaurants, and by adding these whole grains and pseudo-grains to your grocery cart: pot barley, brown or wild rice, sorghum, buckwheat, quinoa, oats, popcorn, millet and whole-grain wheat options, including wheat berries, farro, bulgur and freekeh.



September is Whole Grains Month.



## city events

### Supporting School Age Children Webinar

Wednesday, September 1  
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  
Click [here](#) to register

### Long-Term Care Plan Special Enrollment Webinar

Wednesday, September 1  
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm  
Click [here](#) to join

### Get to Know Accolade Webinar

Thursday, September 2  
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  
Click [here](#) to join

### Long-Term Care Plan Special Enrollment Webinar

Wednesday, September 8  
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm  
Click [here](#) to join

### Deferred Compensation Webinars

#### Nearing Retirement Webinar

Tuesday, September 14  
12:00 pm – 12:45 pm  
Click [here](#) to register

#### In Plan Roth Conversions Webinar

Tuesday, September 28  
12:00 pm – 12:30 pm  
Click [here](#) to register

### How to Engage in Virtual Healthcare Webinar

Wednesday, September 15  
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm  
Login: See future flyer\*

### Change Mastery Webinar

Thursday, September 16  
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  
Click [here](#) to register

### Student Loans Repayment Webinar

Wednesday, September 22  
11:30 am – 12:30 pm  
Click [here](#) to register

### FSA Information Webinar

Thursday, September 23  
11:30 am – 12:00 pm  
Click [here](#) to register

\*Or, call Central Benefits at (206) 615-1340.

“Sometimes things aren't clear right away. That's where you need to be patient and persevere and see where things lead.” — Mary Pierce

The Smart Moves Toolkit, including this issue's printable download, [Help Prevent Medical Errors](#), is at [personalbest.com/extras/21V9tools](https://personalbest.com/extras/21V9tools).

# Exercise: Rx for Childhood Obesity

Almost 20% of American children are obese, according to the CDC. Significantly overweight children are at elevated risk for chronic health problems, including asthma, sleep apnea, elevated blood pressure and joint problems. Obese youngsters often suffer from self-esteem problems and from bullying.



## September is National Childhood Obesity

**Awareness Month**, an opportunity to learn strategies to help overweight children achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle, which can help ensure they reach the right weight for their own body type. Remember, kids come in all shapes and sizes, and should not be put on strict weight loss diets while they are still growing. A child's weight is a concern when it rapidly changes, but not when they are growing steadily and predictably. Your health care provider can help you know the difference.

**Practice positive lifestyle habits with your children**, including healthy eating, sufficient sleep, positive self-talk and ample physical activity. Remember, children thrive on routine. Offer nutritious foods with a consistent daily pattern (say, breakfast, lunch, dinner and a snack) rather than allowing constant grazing.

**Children ages three through five years** should be active throughout the day and youngsters from ages six through 17 should be physically active at least 60 minutes daily. It's a challenge to limit your child's screen time, but it's crucial for weight control.

**Encourage participation in school or community sports activities** and share information with other parents about physical activity opportunities in your neighborhood's parks and community centers. And remember, children imitate adults, so add physical activity to your life. Encourage your kids to join you in activities you all enjoy.

## Headache Relief



**Tension headache is a common condition often triggered by our everyday physical activities and mental stressors.**

**Tension headache pain is typically mild or moderate** in the head, scalp or neck, causing muscle tightness in these areas. It can become intense and last for hours.

### Common tension headache triggers:

- Ongoing physical or emotional stress.
- Too much alcohol or caffeine.
- Jaw clenching or teeth grinding.
- Eyestrain.
- Fatigue.
- Snoring or impaired sleep.
- Colds, flu or sinus infection.

### Besides pain medications, take these steps for relief:

- Get enough sleep, avoid skipping meals and try to pace yourself.
- If you're seated for long periods, stand up and stretch frequently.
- Apply a cold compress to relieve pain in the back of the neck or temples.
- Accumulate at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity, such as brisk walking.
- Avoid medication overuse. Taking headache medications, including over-the-counter options, more than twice a week can increase the severity and frequency of your headaches.
- Try relaxation techniques, breathing meditation and other forms of tension relief to ease stress. Routinely strengthening and stretching the neck and shoulder muscles can significantly help.



**Seek prompt medical care if your headache** is sudden and severe or follows a head injury; is accompanied by fever, stiff neck, confusion, seizure, double vision, weakness, numbness or difficulty speaking; or gets worse despite rest and pain medication.

dollars&sense

## Teach Your Teen Money Smarts

By Jamie Lynn Byram, PhD, AFC

**For children, the teenage years are the perfect time to learn about budgeting and living within their means.** In a few short years, your teen will make financial decisions on their own.

Below are ideas to get teens started on a financially healthy life:

- Establish a set allowance amount.
- Determine if your teen will need to do chores to earn the allowance.
- Give the allowance on the same day of every week.
- Use the allowance to teach money management, not to punish or reward.
- Determine if they have to save a portion each week.
- Discuss past spending mistakes and what was learned from them.
- Determine which expenses your teen must pay (e.g., gas, clothing, makeup, entertainment).
- Open a checking account to teach about daily spending and budgeting.
- Open a savings account for future goals and expenses. Teach how to use online services.
- Teach your teen about credit: scores, card statements, minimum payment, interest rates and total balance. Discuss paying more than the minimum payment or paying balances in full each month.

**Note:** If your teen works, learning money management is crucial, especially if they're saving for college or a big expense, such as a car.



# Organic Food Safety

The organic method of growing food appeals to many people, but you need to take the same precautions when buying organic foods and preparing organic produce as you do with conventionally grown foods.

**Make sure** that the organic products you purchase have the USDA Organic seal. **Note:** **Natural** doesn't mean organic. The federal government doesn't regulate the term **natural**.

**Discard outer leaves** of leafy vegetables before eating to reduce contaminants.

**Wash all produce with warm water before you eat it.** While it's true that organic crops aren't grown with synthetic pesticides, they are cultivated with natural pesticides. They also use natural fertilizers, which could contain dangerous bacteria. Scrub items hard or peel them (e.g., squash or potatoes). **Tip:** Always wash produce before peeling.

**When you shop for organic food,** buy in season to get the freshest produce available.

**Tip:** Organic vegetables and fruits are more expensive than conventional foods, so keep your budget in mind. Also, the term **organic** refers to a growing method. It doesn't indicate nutritional quality. Eat any vegetables and fruits — fresh, canned or frozen — that you can access and afford, whether grown conventionally or organically.



# Food Close to Home

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**Supporting local farmers has gained momentum in the past ten years.** Here's what you need to know about buying locally grown food.

**Local food doesn't always have a predetermined distance,** but it's generally accepted that it's produced within your area or state. From fresh produce to locally raised meat, choosing local has several benefits. It helps create jobs and economic growth in your community, helps the environment by decreasing the carbon footprint, and builds relationships between food growers and consumers.

**Local food often tastes great** because it's likely fresher than food that comes from more than 1,000 miles away. Plus, in-season food is usually available in surplus volumes, which means it may come at a good price.

**Ask about locally grown food in your grocery store,** and check your area for farmers markets. Of course, that market may not have everything you need to stock your fridge. And if you live in the contiguous U.S., you're not going to find locally grown bananas or coffee beans. One of the limits of buying local is that not all communities have the habitat or farmland to grow or raise the ingredients they want.



**Check your local state growing guide** to see what's harvested in each season — it will differ based on where you live. For example, fresh blueberries are picked in April and May in Florida, but are picked in June through September in Oregon. Some foods are grown locally year-round, making them easier to access in all seasons. Tomatoes, peppers, mushrooms and cucumber can grow in indoor greenhouses, while herbs, lettuce and microgreens thrive in indoor vertical farms.

**The bottom line?** It's great to support locally grown food when you can. To learn more, search for **National Guide to Finding Local Food** at [sustainableagriculture.net](http://sustainableagriculture.net).

## Farro Salad with Chive-Citrus Vinaigrette

**EASY** recipe

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 cup farro (substitute wheat berries, pot barley or quinoa) | 3 tbsp orange juice           |
| 1 carrot, diced  | 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil |
| 1 stalk celery, diced  | 1 tbsp rice wine vinegar      |
| 1 red pepper, seeded and diced                               | ¼ tsp salt                    |
| 1 cup cooked green peas                                      | ¼ cup freshly chopped chives  |
| 4 cups baby spinach or kale                                  | ¼ cup salted sunflower seeds  |
|  | 2 tbsp dried cranberries      |



**Cook** farro according to package directions. **Remove** from heat, rinse to cool and add to a large serving bowl. **Add** carrot, celery, pepper, peas and spinach to the bowl. **Toss** well. **In** a small bowl, whisk together orange juice, oil, vinegar, salt and chives. **Pour** dressing over salad. **Sprinkle** with sunflower seeds and cranberries. **Toss** and serve.

**Makes 6 servings. Per serving:** 244 calories | 8g protein | 10g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 6g mono fat | 3g poly fat | 33g carbohydrate | 6g sugar | 8g fiber | 185mg sodium



## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## News & Notes

- **Make Your Long-Term Care Coverage Decision.** The one-time Special Enrollment period to enroll in a private long-term care insurance plan ends at 5:00 pm on **Friday, September 10**. For plan information, a comparison with the WA Trust Care plan and to enroll, go to <https://www.benefitsquest.com/cos/>. Questions? Call the Enrollment Center at **1-855-874-0308** to speak with a Long-Term Care Counselor.
- **Say Hello to Success With a WW Sign up Gift.** Between September 1 and October 31, employees who join WW will be eligible to receive a FREE Hello Success Kit (over \$100 in value). All employees and covered spouses/adult dependents receive a 50% off the retail price and can join now for as low as \$8.48 per month. Sign up at [WW.com/us/CityofSeattle](http://WW.com/us/CityofSeattle) by October 31. Get your Hello Success Kit via an online form at [WW.com/hellosuccess](http://WW.com/hellosuccess) by November 13.
- **See What's New in '22.** Make your 2021 benefit choices Friday, October 1 through Friday, October 22 in Employee Self-Service. Watch your home mail for an Open Enrollment letter in late September to learn about changes in 2022.

## EXPERT advice — Elizabeth Smoots, MD

### Q: Prostate health advice?

September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.



**A:** Every year more than 170,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer, and more than 30,000 die from the disease. The main risk is age greater than 65; other risks are family history of prostate cancer and African American descent. The survival rate is high when prostate cancer is caught early.

**The American Cancer Society** recommends talking with your health care provider about the benefits and risks of prostate cancer screening starting at age 50 if you're at average risk and expected to live for at least ten more years. Men at increased risk should have the discussion at age 40 or 45, depending on level of risk. Screening can be done with a PSA blood test and digital rectal exam.

**The best ways to prevent prostate cancer** are to eat plenty of vegetables and fruit, lose excess weight and, with your provider's okay, get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking, every week.

## Building a Safe Room — Is It for You?

September is National Preparedness Month.



**Preparation is always great**, but in some parts of the country, it is a necessity for survival — especially if you live in an extreme weather area. You must always evacuate when instructed, but when there isn't time, where do you go? For some, a basement isn't an option. That's where **safe rooms** come in, and FEMA has tips for building one:

**Research** what type of shelter best suits your needs: basement, in-ground or above ground.

**Ensure** the shelter meets FEMA's criteria to provide **near-absolute** protection in extreme weather events. That means it should withstand an EF-5 tornado with winds exceeding 200 mph.

**Hire** a professional to build a shelter or purchase a pre-manufactured building that meets the National Storm Shelter Association standards.

**Tip:** If you decide to do it yourself, make sure that everything meets FEMA standards.

**Learn more at [fema.gov](http://fema.gov)** about storm shelters, standards and resources.



## TIP of the MONTH Cooking Grains

**Some whole grains, such as pot barley and farro, can take up to an hour to cook.** Save time by making double batches and freezing leftover cooked grains. When ready to use, simply microwave or steam with some water until hot. You can also buy quick-cooking grains that take less than 20 minutes to prepare. Try oats, quinoa, bulgur, buckwheat, teff, millet and parboiled brown rice.