Whole grain baking opens up a world of new flavors and textures. Whole grains are not just for bread, but can be used in pancakes, muffins, brownies, cakes and cookies. For most baking, you can substitute up to 1/2 of the white flour for whole wheat flour in the recipe. For some recipes, such as pancakes and cookies, you can substitute 1/3 of the flour in the recipe with quick oats or old-fashioned oats.

Experiment with whole grain baking for health benefits. Whole grains are receiving much attention today. Studies show that eating whole grains instead of refined grains lowers the risk of many chronic diseases. While benefits are greatest for those consuming at least 3 servings daily, some studies show reduced risks from as little as one serving daily. The message: every whole grain in your diet helps!

The main benefits of whole grains

The benefits of whole grains most documented by repeated studies include:

- stroke risk reduced 30-36%
- type 2 diabetes risk reduced 21-30%
- heart disease risk reduced 25-28%
- Better weight maintenance

Source: Whole Grains Council

Storing Whole Wheat Flour

Whole wheat flour contains oil from the wheat germ and can go rancid tasting bitter. Whole wheat flour can be stored at room temperature for 1 to 3 months. For longer storage, whole wheat flour should be stored in an airtight container or freezer bag in the refrigerator or freezer. It will maintain good quality for about 6 months in the refrigerator and up to 12 months in the freezer.

Likewise, you will want to store other whole grain products (wheat germ, whole corn meal) in the refrigerator or freezer for longer shelf life. It is a good idea to bring flour to room temperature before using, so it doesn’t affect the action of baking powder or yeast.
Whole grains contain antioxidants, phytonutrients, fiber, minerals and vitamins. Make half your grains whole for your health!

**Sour Cream Coffee Cake**

**Ingredients:**
- 1/2 cup low transfat margarine
- 1/4 cup canola oil (or vegetable oil)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup low-fat sour cream or yogurt
- 1 cup white flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

**Nut Filling**
- 1/3 cup chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large mixing bowl, blend together margarine and oil. Add vanilla and sugar and beat well. Blend in eggs and sour cream or yogurt.
3. Mix together flours, soda and baking powder. Add to cake mixture and beat well.
4. Place half of cake mixture in bottom of a nonstick sprayed angel food or bundt cake pan.
5. Mix together nut filling and sprinkle over cake batter.
6. Pour remaining batter into pan.
7. Bake 45 minutes. Cake is done when a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean and dry.

**Pumpkin Bread**

**Ingredients:**
- 2 cups canned pumpkin
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup oil (canola or vegetable)
- 2/3 cup water
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons soda
- 1 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large mixing bowl, blend pumpkin, sugar, oil, water and eggs.
3. Add whole wheat flour, white flour, soda, nutmeg, ginger and cinnamon.
4. Beat at medium speed for 2 minutes.
5. Grease and flour bottoms of 2 bread pans.
6. Bake 60 to 75 minutes. Bake until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
7. Cool 5 minutes and remove from pan.
8. Cool on wire rack.

Yield: 2 loaves
Mix for Whole Grain Pancakes

Mix Ingredients:
- 4 cups whole grain flour (your choice: whole wheat, spelt, graham)
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 teaspoons salt
- 3 cups dry milk powder
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1/3 cup baking powder

Directions for pancakes:
1. Combine 2 cups mix with enough water to make a thick pancake batter, about 1 ½ cup. The amount of water will vary based on the flours you have used in the mix.
2. Add 2 tablespoons oil.
3. Add 1 beaten egg.
4. Mix and pour batter onto hot griddle.
5. Flip pancakes when bubbly and edges are dry.
6. Top with apple butter or other fruit topping for a healthy alternative to syrup.
7. Store mix in an airtight container or freezer bag. Refrigerate or freeze mix for freshness.

Blueberry Muffins

Ingredients:
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups thawed frozen blueberries
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a large mixing bowl combine flours, sugar, baking powder and cinnamon.
3. In a small bowl, mix milk, oil, vanilla and egg until well blended.
4. Add milk mixture to dry ingredients, stir until just moistened.
5. Stir in blueberries.
6. Spoon batter into non-stick sprayed muffin tins.
7. Sprinkle tops with 1/2 tablespoon sugar.
8. Bake for 20—25 minutes in 400 degree oven.
9. Let muffins stand for 5 minutes before removing from pan.
Look for the Whole Grain Label

The Whole Grains Council has created an official packaging symbol called the Whole Grain Stamp that helps consumers find real whole grain products. With the Whole Grain Stamp, finding three servings of whole grain is easy: pick three foods with the 100% Stamp or six foods with Any Whole Grain Stamp. The 100 percent Stamp assures you that a food contains a full serving or more of whole grain, while the basic Whole Grain Stamp appears on products containing at least half a serving of whole grain per labeled serving. For more information on whole grains, visit the Whole Grains Council website at www.wholegrainscouncil.org.

Source: Whole Grains Council