

Cereal Confusion

It's embarrassing, but I can get fooled by labels too. I've recommended Grape Nuts as a whole grain cereal choice, so I was surprised when I read the label more closely.

I prefer to eat minimally processed whole grains like oatmeal, steel cut oats or one of the Bob's Red Mill hot cereals. When I buy cold cereal, I get Ezekiel, which is like a healthier version of Grape Nuts. It's made from a nice variety of sprouted whole grains and, as near as I can tell, contains intact whole grains. The only additive is salt.

The *Nutrition Action Health Letter* by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, recently trashed Grape Nuts, so I read the label more carefully. Sure enough, the second ingredient is wheat flour – which is white flour. It's not 100% whole grain.

The article recommended Kashi Whole Grain Nuggets as an alternative, but even though it really is 100% whole grain, it is still made from flour instead of intact whole grain.

Flours made from whole grains have the same nutrient and fiber content, but have a higher glycemic index, meaning they have more blood-sugar raising effect than intact whole grains. Flour has more surface area so it is digested more quickly.

Whole wheat flour is still better than white (or "wheat") flour, but the more whole a food is, the better. Wheat berries are whole, cracked wheat is chopped. Sprouted grains can be whole or chopped, and have additional benefits. Sprouting increases protein levels and activates enzymes which makes it more digestible and improves the absorption of nutrients. People with a mild wheat intolerance may tolerate it sprouted.

When you buy processed cereal out of a package, you usually get added sugar and preservatives. That's why I prefer plain rolled oats. Read the label and choose foods that are mostly whole and with minimal additions. Other good cooked options include quinoa (whole or flakes), millet and amaranth.

Mindful Holiday Eating

What is your favorite part of Thanksgiving? The turkey, stuffing, and pumpkin pie? Having time to hang out with family and friends? The whole idea of giving thanks for all that that is good in our lives?



If you find it challenging to be moderate with your food and drink choices at this primo food holiday, try stepping back and thinking about the big picture. What is really most important here? What are the food and non-food elements that you want most to savor and enjoy?

Imagine the event. Think about what will be there: the setting, the people, the seasonal ambience, and the food itself. Think, too, about your life. This is the time of harvest: what can you gather from your year? What gets taken for granted in the day-to-day rush? What are you thankful for?

Then imagine yourself at the holiday meal. Imagine greeting family and friends; feeling nourished by those relationships. Imagine soaking in the ambience, basking in the warm glow of the day. Feeling relaxed, content and nourished.

And finally, imagine yourself filling your plate with thanksgiving food in a mindful way. Choose the foods that are most important to you, and take the amounts that will be nourishing and enjoyable, without making you feel stuffed.

Imagine eating: enjoying the food, eating slowly and consciously, savoring every bite. Imagine pausing mid-meal to check in: have you had enough? Do you feel satisfied? "Fill up" as much on your companions as you do the food.

Imagining the day ahead of time helps you be prepared for the actual event. Truly enjoy the food, stop eating when you are done, and tune in to how nourishing this day is.

Have a happy Thanksgiving!



Vitamin D Reminder

Remember that unless you live near the equator, you don't get enough vitamin D from the sun in winter. It is time to up your usual dose—1,000 to 2,000 IU is a reasonable basic range. Get tested for vitamin D levels if you haven't done so already. If you are one of the many people who are vitamin D deficient, you may need a higher dose.

Recipes for the Month

[White Bean Soup \(from the Veggie Queen\)](#)

[Greens and Polenta](#)

[Stuffed Acorn Squash with Shitakes and Greens](#)

Click the links to the recipe, or find them on my blog at www.HealthyHabitsCoach.wordpress.com.

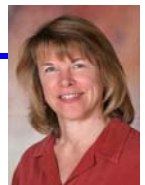
Volunteers wanted for mindful eating CD

I'm coming out with a CD of my favorite mindful eating exercises. I'd like to do a couple live rehearsals before recording. It would take about two hours, by phone. Contact me at 707 431-7524 or kathy@HealthyHabitsCoach.com

Kathy Nichols: Life Coach & Registered Dietitian

Are you ready to stop dieting and looking for a way of eating that is sustainable, enjoyable and healthy?

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Kathy Nichols is the Healthy Habits Coach. A nutrition expert with 30 years experience as a registered Dietitian, her life coach training and certification is through the Coaches Training Institute. Change how you think about food!

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