

**DO YOU KNOW** what exactly is a "whole" grain? A grain is made up of three parts: **Bran or hull** - tough outer layers of the kernel that protect the grain. **Germ** - the heart of the seed because this is what germinates the plant, providing life-sustaining nutrients. **Endosperm** - the center of the grain which is starchy and nourishes the tiny seedling. A **whole** grain contains all three parts. The refining process partially or completely removes the bran and germ, leaving the starch with faint nutritional value. Complex carbohydrates found in **whole grains** *are important for everyday body functions, disease prevention, and even weight control.* So when you go shopping.....read the label of ingredients please, so you get the whole grain!

**BOOST YOUR FIBER** One of the most troubling pitfalls of the typical Western diet is a lack of dietary fiber. As an indigestible component of food, eating more fiber can help you lose weight, lower your cholesterol, stabilize blood sugars, and protect the health of your colon. Don't let fiber get lost in your daily diet. If you have difficulty getting the recommended daily 25-30 grams of dietary fiber, here are some helpful tips: **1** Start your day with a fiber-rich cereal, like All Bran. This is an easy way to get a quick 9 grams of fiber. **2** Always eat a piece of fruit and some veggies with lunch. A salad is an easy way to get more fiber. **3** Eat the skin or peel (if edible). These usually have an abundance of fiber, so don't peel your apples, nectarines or pears, and make sure to eat the skin off your potatoes. **4** Swap white bread for whole grain breads for an easy two extra grams of fiber. Or swap that brown bread for sprouted grain breads, which offer up to four grams of fiber in each slice. **5** Snack on nuts. Not only are they rich in essential fatty acids, they can bulk up your fiber intake too. Just one ounce of almonds has three grams of fiber. (*LifeScript*)

**Drink tea** Black and green teas contain polyphenols, antioxidant plant compounds that prevent plaque from adhering to your teeth and help reduce your chances of developing cavities and gum disease. "Tea also has potential for reducing bad breath because it inhibits the growth of the bacteria that cause the odor," explains Christine D. Wu, PhD, associate dean for research at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry, who has conducted several studies on tea and oral health. Many teas also contain fluoride (from the leaves and the water it's steeped in), which helps protect tooth enamel from decay. (*Prevention*)