

On the Menu: Gluten-Free Whole Grains

Written By Beth Ehrensberger, MPH, RD on May 11, 2011



(HealthCastle.com) No need to feel deprived if you follow a gluten-free diet - there are plenty of delicious gluten-free whole grains that are just right for you. In addition to adding flavor and variety to your day, they're also super-healthy and brimming with [antioxidants](#) and fiber! Why not choose something new for dinner tonight? Our menu tips for gluten-free whole grains can make a simple, tasty, and just-right-for-your-diet meal.

Go-to Gluten-Free Whole Grains

Amaranth:



- This high-protein whole grain can be ground into a flour to be combined with other gluten-free flours (like potato) for baking. Or, you can cook it up as a side to accompany grilled fish and a veggie. Just measure the desired amount of amaranth (along with the package's recommended amount of water) into a pot, boil for 15-20 minutes, then drain, rinse, and eat. Amaranth can even be popped in a pot with a little oil just as you would do for popcorn; use it to make a fun and crunchy topping for whatever you like.
- **Buckwheat:**



Don't let the name fool you - there's no wheat here! Buckwheat is a winner not only for its gluten-free whole grain goodness, but also for its high content of soluble fiber, protein, and minerals like potassium and zinc. One of the easiest ways to eat buckwheat is in the form of noodles. Toss together a quick meal of buckwheat

noodles, veggies, and a lean meat like shaved chicken or pork, then shake on a little bottled low-sodium stir-fry sauce if you like for an easy weeknight meal. The big bonus? Buckwheat's nutty, slightly sweet flavor is one that even the pickiest eaters can appreciate.

Corn:



- Don't forget about this common staple when you're looking for gluten-free whole grains. Wishing for a crunchy, carby afternoon snack? Dust off your old air popper (or go buy a new one for a nominal price) and make a healthy bowl of popcorn. Or, during the warm summer months, grill fresh, tender ears of corn for a simple dinner side. If you're using cornmeal in recipes, just be sure to check the label to ensure it reads "whole grain" or "whole corn" to guarantee you are getting the benefits of [whole grains](#).

Millet:



- It may be found in birdseed, but it's not just for the birds! You can enjoy the high antioxidant power of this whole grain simply by popping it in a lightly oiled pot just as you would amaranth or corn. Like many other whole grains, you can use it as the base for a side dish to which you can add other flavors for a pilaf (think dried cranberries and mandarin oranges or pecans and chopped apricots); just simmer 2 1/4 cups of water (or low-sodium broth) per cup of millet for about 25 minutes, then fluff with a fork to enjoy.

Quinoa:



- Though you can find oats that are safe for a gluten-free diet, why not try a new hot breakfast cereal to warm your belly? Simmer a cup of rinsed quinoa with two cups of fat-free or 1% milk until most of the liquid is absorbed (about 20 minutes). Serve topped with berries or sliced banana for an eye-opening meal that's full of fiber,

protein, and potassium to rev up your morning. Also, like millet, quinoa makes a great base for a pilaf or grain salad.

The Bottom Line

A gluten-free diet doesn't mean that you have to miss out on the nutritious goodness of whole grains - in fact, there are more whole grains that are gluten-free than those that are not! Try our tips, or experiment with others such as sorghum, montina, and wild rice to build your own list of favorite go-to gluten-free whole grains.

Nut Flours as Gluten-Free Flour Substitutes

Written By Owennie Lee, RD on Apr 01, 2010



(HealthCastle.com) Following a gluten-free diet is a challenging exercise in itself, and when it comes to baking, it can be downright exasperating. Have you found yourself struggling with supplemental ingredients to replace wheat flour, only to end up with disappointing results? You might want to try using nut flours as an easy gluten-free substitution.

Why Nut Flours?

Recipes for gluten-free baking using concoctions of gluten-free grains and gums are widely available, but you do not have to limit your options to grains. All [nuts](#) are gluten-free, as are nut flours. [The Celiac Sprue Association](#) provides a list of nut flours commonly used in cooking, as does [Shelley Case, RD](#), in her book *Gluten-Free Diet: A Comprehensive Resource Guide*. Out of all the nut flours, almond flour is by far the most versatile. It has been used in European cooking for centuries, and its use extends beyond desserts and baking. In addition, unlike the dry and gritty texture that is common in gluten-free baked goods, foods made with almond flour are

moist and have better mouthfeel. How does almond flour fare nutritionally, compared to other flours?

Nutrient content per 1/2 cup serving	All-Purpose Flour	Almond Flour	Corn Flour	Sorghum Flour
Gluten Free?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Calories (kCal)	228	320	416	240
Fat (g)	0.6	28	4.3	2
Protein (g)	6.5	12	10.6	8
Fiber (g)	1.7	6	10.9	6

Almond flour is much higher in fat (most of which is the heart-healthy unsaturated kind) and protein than the other flours, which explains why you may feel fuller for longer after eating food made with almond flour.

Finally, according to [Elana Amsterdam](#), author of *The Gluten-Free Almond Flour Cookbook*, almond flour is comparatively easy to work with, as there is no need to mix several grains and gums or potato flour for binding. That alone is a good enough reason to try almond flour!

Using Nut Flours

Nut flours are different from nut meals in that a nut flour is made with blanched nuts, while a nut meal is usually made with whole nuts. You can choose to make your own nut flours at home, or you can buy them. It is, however, very important to point out that not all commercial nut flours are gluten-free. Although the nuts themselves are free of gluten, the manufacturing plant in which these nut flours are processed may not be, and may therefore contaminate the nut flours. If you are purchasing commercially prepared nut flours, you must look for a gluten-free label in order to be certain of a particular product's gluten-free status.

The Bottom Line

In addition to almond flour, the following nut flours can also be used in cooking, but more substitutions and modifications may be required:

- acorn (does not bind well)
- chestnut (does not bind well)
- coconut
- walnut
- peanut
- hazelnut
- macadamia nut

Almond flour's ease of use, better taste, and nutritional merits make it a viable option for gluten-free cooking. Other nut flours can be used, but they do not seem to be as versatile. When purchasing a commercial nut flour, it is very important to check the label to ensure that it is gluten-free.

Finding Hidden Gluten in Your Foods

Written By Elizabeth Daeninck, MS, RD on Nov 01, 2008



(HealthCastle.com) Following a [gluten-free diet](#) can be challenging at the best of times, and successfully avoiding gluten requires a bit of detective work. It may not be obvious when reading a food label that a particular food contains gluten. Below is a list of the many food ingredients and additives that may contain hidden gluten. If you are gluten intolerant, it is important to verify specific foods to ensure that they do not contain hidden gluten.

Hidden Gluten in Foods

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baking Powder• Binders• Blue Cheese• Brown rice syrup• Caramel colorings or flavorings• Cereal fillers, protein or starch• Citric Acid• Coatings• Colorings• Corn Starch | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Malt or Malt Flavoring (barley malt, malt vinegar)• Maltodextrin• Modified starch, Modified food starch (made from wheat)• Mono- and di-glycerides (made using a wheat starch carrier)• Natural flavorings• Oils (wheat germ oil and others with gluten additives) |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curry Powder • Dextrins • Dispersing Agents • Emulsifiers • Excipients (in prescription medications, for consistency) • Extracts (in grain alcohol) • Fillers • Flavorings (in grain alcohol) • Flours made from wheat, barley, oats, and rye • Grain alcohol (beer, ale, rye, scotch, bourbon, grain vodka) • Gum base • Homeopathic remedies • Hydrolyzed protein, Hydrolyzed plant protein (HPP), Hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservatives • Soy sauce (when fermented with wheat) • Spices (if anti-caking agent used) • Starch (modified food starch, edible starch) • Textured vegetable protein (TVP) • Vegetable gum • Vegetable protein or starch • Vinegars (white, or malt)Vital wheat gluten (common in soy products) • Vitamin E oil |
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Source: Going Gluten Free Workshop by Lisa Lanzano, MS, RD, [Essential Nutrition](#)

Gluten at a Glance

As is obvious from the list above, it is difficult to know for sure whether a food contains gluten by simply looking over its label. If you are in doubt, it is best to call the food company to ensure that you are not getting any hidden gluten in your diet. It is also wise to look for foods that actually state on their food label that they are gluten-free. Although there are gluten-free alternatives available for most of the ingredients listed above, if you don't make the effort to check, you may be consuming hidden gluten.