

Choose healthy breads

So many choices — which is the best and healthiest bread? Look for **whole grain** breads. Research shows that they are heart healthy, and help prevent weight gain and cancer. Refined flours lack the fiber, minerals, and B and E vitamins found in whole grains.

Don't rely on the product name or description to tell you if a bread is nutritious. Flours in many 5-grain, wheat or multi-grain breads may actually be refined. Also, the bread's color may not indicate whether it is whole grain: Many darker breads have molasses added for color.

How do I know it is whole grain?

The word "whole" should be part of the first or second item on the ingredients list. Examples are "whole wheat," "stone ground whole wheat" or "whole rye flour". The words "wheat flour", "enriched wheat flour" or "unbleached flour" all indicate refined flours.

What else should I look for?

- At least 2g (grams) of dietary fiber per serving.
- Number of slices in one serving.
- Partially hydrogenated oils or high fructose corn syrup in the ingredients list (avoid these)

Any recommendations for breads to try? Here are a few of the many whole grain breads available. Check out

store brands too!

Arnold's 100% Whole Wheat, Grains and More, Sandwich Thins

Barowsky's Whole Grain Organic Whole Wheat

Country Kitchen 100% whole wheat

Fiber One 100% whole wheat

Joseph's Whole Wheat; Flax, Oatbran & Whole Wheat

Nature's Pride 100% whole wheat, multigrain, 12 grain, double fiber

Pepperidge Farm Whole Grain, 100% Natural, 100% whole grain Deli Flats

Thomas' 100% whole wheat pita, 100% whole wheat English muffins

Vermont Bread Company whole wheat, sprouted wheat, sunflower sesame, 10 grain

Weight Watchers 100% whole wheat bread, pita pocket and English muffins; wheat sandwich rolls.

What if I don't like the taste? Try a different brand or variety, or one of the whole-grain white flour products.

References:

AmJ Clin Nutr 2003;78:829-7.

www.eatingwell.com,

Our Daily Bread: Grains of truth, wheat and chafe by David L. Katz, www.davidkatzmd.com

Recipe of the week: Spinach and three-cheese calzone

8 servings

adapted from epicurious.com

- 1 lb. wheat pizza dough
- 1 lb. bag frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed as dry as possible
- 5 scallions, chopped fine
- 1 2/3 cup fontina cheese, shredded
- 7/8 cup part-skim ricotta cheese
- 7/8 cup crumbled blue cheese

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Spray large baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Flour large cutting board or countertop. Flatten dough and stretch into rectangle, about 12"x 15".
3. Lay out dough flat on baking sheet.

4. Combine spinach, scallions, ricotta and blue cheese in large bowl. Mix well. Add fontina.
5. Cover about half the dough (lengthwise) with filling. Leave a margin along the outside edges.
6. Fold dough over filling. Pinch edges to close. Cut 3 slots in the top to allow steam to escape.
7. Bake 15 minutes or till golden brown. Slice into 8 pieces. Dip in marinara sauce, if desired.

Nutrition information: Calories: 282 Total Fat: 16g
Saturated Fat: 9g Sodium: 705 mg
Carbohydrate: 21g Dietary Fiber: 3g Protein: 16 g

Tip of the Week: The "talk test" is often used to gauge the intensity of physical activity; if you can carry on a conversation while exercising you are at an appropriate level of exertion. Researchers from UNH recently studied people at an above-average level of fitness. They found that when these already fit individuals could talk while exercising, they were not working at their full capacity. The conclusion: if you are fit and want to improve your performance, push yourself beyond the point where you can talk easily. The talk test is still recommended for beginners and for people who are not competitive athletes.

—"Re-Thinking the Exercise Talk Test," by Gretchen Reynolds, well.blogs.nytimes.com, Sept. 21, 2011.