

Breads - Which One to Choose?

White, wholemeal, multigrain, wholegrain, rye, soy & linseed, sourdough, spelt and the list could go on. How do you know which bread to choose and which ones to avoid??? Let's just start by saying no bread is going to make you gain weight. Bread is not bad for you. In fact if you choose the right bread, it can actually provide a good dose of fibre to keep you fuller for longer, along with other nutrients to help keep you kickin. But bread will be fattening if you consume too much in one day, not because of the bread itself, but because of the surplus of calories you may end up consuming, because as we know, too many calories leads to weight gain. Just like anything else, moderation is key. Lets start with white.

White bread has the nutritional value equivalent to cardboard... very little. Most people know this now and are changing to healthier options. When making white bread, or more to the point white flour, the bran and germ of the wheat are removed. Bran is where all that lovely fibre comes from and the germ is the nutrient powerhouse. So why eat something that has completely depleted itself of any nutritional value? You wouldn't, so no more white bread! Lets move on!

Wholemeal bread is made from whole wheat and contains the fibre and nutrients that are striped in the making of white flour. It is less processed than white bread and has a much higher nutritional value. Not a bad option. Now multigrain and wholegrain may sound similar but in actual fact they are not. Multigrain is often a very clever marketing tool to distract the buyer from the fact that they are actually buying white bread with a few different grains thrown into it, giving it its multigrain name. Wholegrain on the other hand is usually wholemeal bread with more whole grain thrown in, making it the healthier of the two. Café's in particular stump you with this multigrain rubbish. If in doubt of whether the toast you are getting is whole grain or multigrain, just opt for wholemeal instead.

Rye bread is made from rye grain rather than wheat grain. Rye has a darker colour and a rich, hearty taste. It is jam packed with fibre and is not a bad choice when it comes to bread. But wait there's more...

The hip and trendy sourdough is now a big hit with consumers and café's. Sourdough is left to rise for much longer than traditional bread. The longer fermentation time actually leads to some pre-digested starches making it much easier for you to digest. Plus it contains all important beneficial bacteria, great for gut health. Combine wholegrain with sourdough and you start to see a bit of a winner in the bread department.

The main thing to keep in mind when choosing a bread is to read the label. Look for the words "wholegrains" and for ones that have 2g of fibre or more per serve. And remember, bread is not fattening. If you eat a loaf a day, it will lead to too many calories and of course weight gain. But if you moderate your bread intake, and you keep your calories in check, than enjoy that delicious piece of bread. Also be mindful of the condiments you put with bread... honey, jam, Nutella, butter, deli meats – not so great. But vegemite, avocado, small amount of peanut butter, salads, fresh meats – good choice.

Enjoy some toast for breakfast or a sandwich for lunch, ensure that your calories are where they need to be to ensure the goal you are trying to achieve and remember to enjoy everything in moderation. Life's too short to only eat salad!