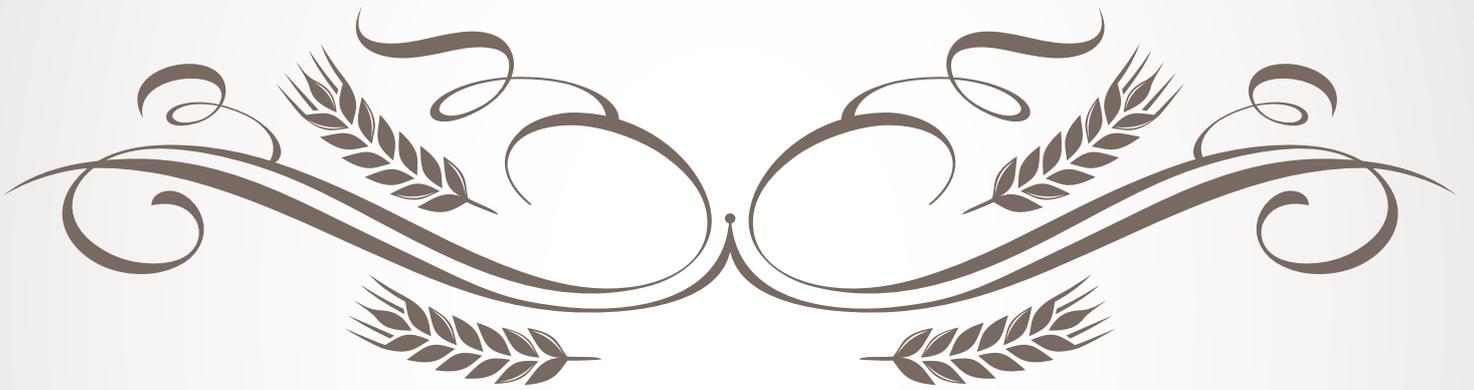


BREAD



THE REAL STORY



Bread - The Real Story

For some, largely unexplained, reason bread gets a bad press. Sure there are differing views about bread, but it gets more than its fair share of criticism, a lot of which is unwarranted and not based on scientific facts. To add to the confusion, research and nutrition facts quoted are often based on American style white bread which is completely different in composition, particularly its sugar content, to the healthier Irish style bread.

We'd like to take this opportunity to dispel some of the myths. And to tell you some things about bread that you may not know.

Myths about bread

Bread causes bloating – not true

Although bread, and in particular the way some modern bread is made, is often accused of causing bloating, that's not the case. A review of the topic by the British Nutrition Foundation concluded that there is no scientific evidence that regular consumption of bread causes bloating or digestive problems. Furthermore, whether the bread is produced by traditional methods or by modern bread making processes makes no difference. There was still no bloating unless there was a sudden increase in fibre intake.

Source: British Nutrition Foundation, Weichselbaum 2012

Bread does not contain any nutrients – not true

Contrary to popular belief, bread is good for us providing protein, folic acid and many nutrients such as dietary fibre, vitamins and minerals.

Research undertaken by the Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA) found that bread provides as much as 10% of Irish peoples' daily intake of protein and folic acid. Although brown bread contains more fibre than white bread, because of its popularity white bread provides 9% of our daily fibre intake.

Perhaps surprisingly, it is also the second main contributor to both the iron and calcium intake of the Irish diet.

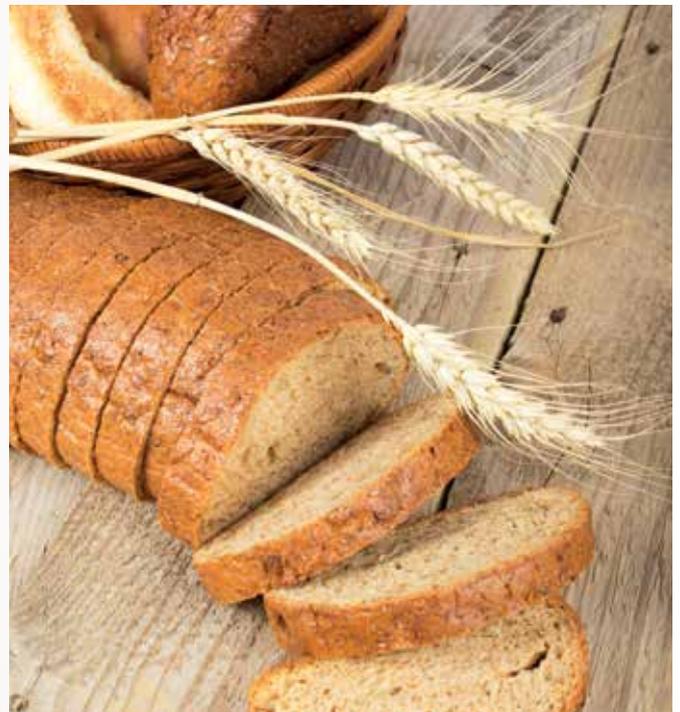
Source: Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA)



White bread has a high GI and is therefore bad for you – not true

The GI or Glycaemic Index measures how foods containing carbohydrates affect our blood sugar. Low GI foods release glucose more slowly into the blood stream than foods with a higher GI index. Although some studies have suggested that a low GI, high fibre diet may help to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes, there is not sufficient consistent evidence to recommend a low GI diet for prevention.

White and wholemeal bread have relatively high GIs. However, most of the time bread is combined with protein and fat - when it is eaten with a meal or as a sandwich, for example. This combination means that the carbohydrate is digested more slowly and glucose enters the bloodstream at a slower rate.

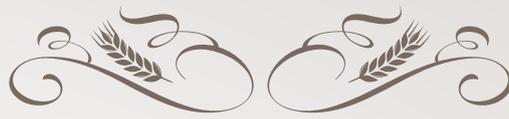


Eating bread causes weight gain – no evidence that this is the case

The myth that wheat consumption causes obesity or sickness has been dispelled by a study recently published in the Journal of Cereal Science. A team from Maastricht University in the Netherlands and Rothamsted Research UK conducted an extensive review of all related scientific studies.

Importantly, the researchers argued that the cause of obesity cannot be specific to one type of food, while ignoring overconsumption and inactive lifestyles. They stated that "Hard data about adverse effects of wheat, consumed in baked, extruded, and other processed foods, are not available, and there are no grounds to advise the general public not to consume this common dietary staple."

Source: Journal of Cereal Science, September 2013, Volume 58, Issue 2



Bread Facts

Here are some things you may not have known about bread

Bread is the best of the cereal foods

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) the raised bread loaf is the best of the cereal foods and provides more nourishment for humans than any other food source.

Wheat is the most important source of carbohydrate in a majority of countries. Wheat starch is easily digested, as is most wheat protein. It contains minerals, vitamins and fats and is highly nutritious. The FAO also states that a predominately wheat-based diet is higher in fibre than a meat-based diet.

Source: FAO – Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations www.fao.org/docrep/006/y4011e



Bread is good for you

Bread is an excellent source of proteins, vitamins, minerals, fibre and complex carbohydrates. It is also low in fat and cholesterol. Bread is quite bulky so it takes longer to digest and is therefore more satisfying and less fattening than the fats, sugars and alcohols often consumed in excess.

Bread supplies a significant portion of the nutrients required for growth, maintenance of health and well-being. The average percentage of our daily nutrient requirements supplied by 100g of any bread shows that bread is an excellent source of many nutrients that are necessary for a healthy diet.

All bread is nutritious

All breads are nutritious. And the differences between white, brown and wholemeal bread are not significant in terms of nutritional value so long as we eat a balanced diet.

White bread has approximately the same carbohydrate and protein content as wholemeal bread. It also contains soluble and insoluble dietary fibre, and a good percentage of the wholewheat nutrients.

If you prefer white bread to wholegrain breads, you can get your extra fibre from other wholegrain foods.

Source: Why Eat Bread <http://whyeatbread.com/>



Bread and salt

Salt is a natural part of bread making. It adds flavour and helps the fermentation process. However, over the last thirty or so years, Irish bakers have gradually reduced the amount of salt by around 10%. Having said that, some types of bread still contain more salt than others. So it's best to check the labels if you are concerned about how much salt you are consuming.

Bread is Brain Food

The brain's preferred fuel is glucose which comes from the metabolism of carbohydrates in the diet. Bread is a brain food as not only does it provide carbohydrate but also a range of B Vitamins which are believed to play a crucial role in a healthy functioning brain.

The best fuel for your muscles is carbohydrates, and that is also true for your brain. Insufficient consumption of carbohydrates reduces physical and mental performance.

Source: The Grain Foods Foundation <http://www.grainsforyourbrain.org/>

Bread and the Irish Diet - some interesting facts

- 90% of Irish adults are consumers of white bread which contributes only 6% of our total energy intake while 72% eat wholemeal bread.
- Bread (both brown and white) only provides 1% of the fat content of the Irish diet
- Irish people get more iron from white bread than they do from meat and fish dishes.
- White bread is the second highest contributor to the calcium intake of the Irish population.

Source: Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA)



THIS FACT SHEET WAS COMPILED BY
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