

BREAD **MYTHS AND FACTS**

FOREWORD

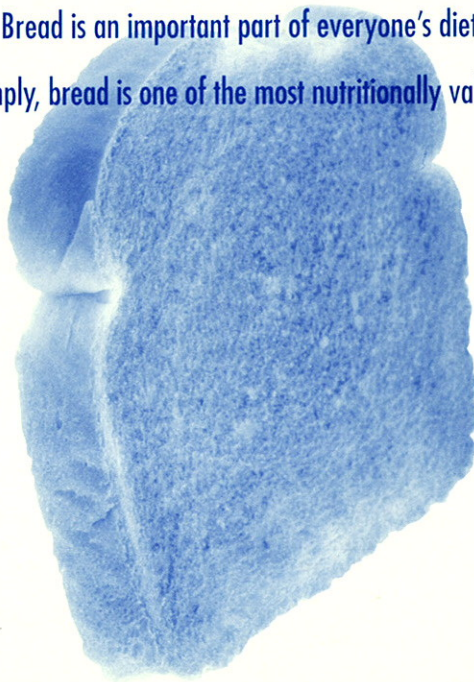
by Dr Juliet Gray

Our hectic, modern lifestyles make us look for convenient foods which satisfy our needs by being versatile, tasty and healthy.

Bread, in one form or another, has formed a staple part of the human diet for thousands of years, but nowadays is often overlooked due to a belief that it lacks nutritional value or that eating bread makes you gain weight.

This leaflet is intended to provide answers to the questions many people have about bread, and also to dispel some of the myths and rumours that may prevent people from enjoying it.

White, brown and wholemeal breads are an inexpensive source of many of the nutrients your body needs, whatever your age. Bread is an important part of everyone's diet even if you are watching your weight. Put simply, bread is one of the most nutritionally valuable foods that money can buy.



THE MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth 1

Bread is of little nutritional value

Fact 1

Bread is a good source of B vitamins, which are essential for the release of energy from foods and a healthy nervous system, and minerals such as iron, needed for healthy blood and circulation, and zinc, important in growth and wound healing. Bread also contains folic acid, which is needed for the formation of blood cells and growth. Folic acid is essential for women who are trying to conceive, or are in the early stages of pregnancy. By law, white and brown flours are fortified with calcium, essential for healthy bones, and six medium slices of white bread per day provides more than 30% of the Recommended Daily Allowance.

Myth 2

Many people are intolerant/allergic to bread

Fact 2

It is estimated that in the UK, only 1-2 per cent of people suffer from true food allergies (abnormal reactions of the body's immune system). Nevertheless, 20 per cent of the adult population believe themselves to be allergic to one or more types of food and unnecessarily miss out on bread because they think they are allergic or intolerant of wheat. Wheat is present in many food products and avoiding bread, pasta or breakfast cereals is unnecessary for most people. Self diagnosis is inaccurate and potentially harmful. *It is important that anyone who thinks that they suffer from a food allergy or intolerance should consult their doctor or a state registered dietitian before removing major food groups from their diet.*

Myth 3

We should reduce the amount of carbohydrate we consume in favour of a high protein, low carbohydrate diet.

Fact 3

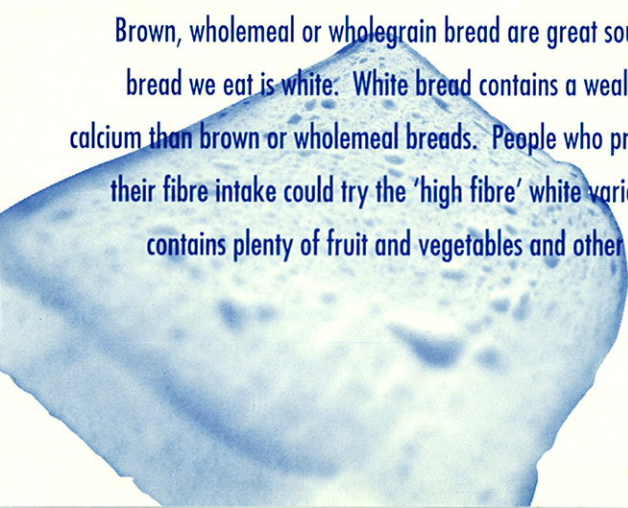
High protein, low carbohydrate diets are potentially harmful in the long term. Potential side effects can range from bad breath and constipation to kidney problems. Nutrition experts say most of us should be increasing the amount of starchy carbohydrate we eat. We need to eat less fatty foods and replace them with more carbohydrate-rich foods in our diet. Bread is a major provider of carbohydrates so eating more bread is an easy and convenient way of doing this.

Myth 4

I should only eat brown or wholemeal bread; they're better for me

Fact 4

Brown, wholemeal or wholegrain bread are great sources of fibre, however, 70 per cent of the bread we eat is white. White bread contains a wealth of nutrients and actually contains more calcium than brown or wholemeal breads. People who prefer white bread but are concerned about their fibre intake could try the 'high fibre' white varieties but should also ensure that their diet contains plenty of fruit and vegetables and other fibre-rich foods such as breakfast cereals.

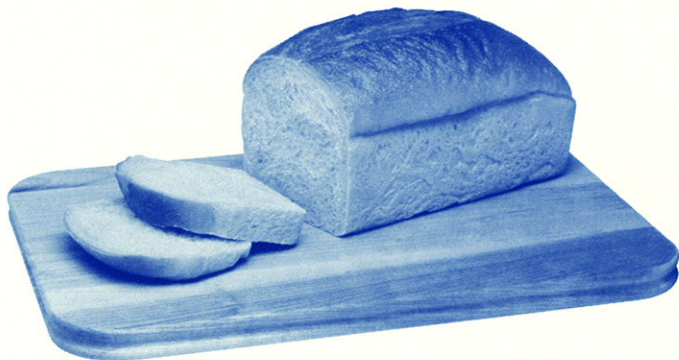


Myth 5

Bread is fattening

Fact 5

With an average of less than 80 calories per slice, bread alone is not 'fattening', the problem is usually in the type of topping or sandwich filling that people add. Certain kinds of ethnic and speciality breads have a higher fat content and therefore contain more calories than ordinary bread. If you are trying to lose weight, only use low fat spreads, toppings and fillings and add plenty of salads and fruit. For some healthy sandwich ideas, visit www.fabflour.co.uk.



Myth 6

There is too much salt in bread

Fact 6

Bakers in the UK have reduced the salt content of a loaf of bread by a quarter since the 1980s and were recently praised for their efforts by the Food Standards Agency. Whilst salt is still indisputably a vital ingredient in bread, bread consumption represents only about 14 per cent of our average intake of salt, whereas salt added during cooking or at the table accounts for 15 to 30 percent!

Myth 7

A sandwich is not a proper meal

Fact 7

Sandwiches are unbeatable as a quick, nutritious and tasty meal. Sandwiches provide a healthy alternative to other types of 'fast food', especially when combined with foods containing vitamins and minerals such as fruit.



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