Benefits of READY-TO-EAT CEREAL

At Breakfast, Cereal is the #1 Source of Whole Grain

Americans are still missing out on whole grains. 9 out of 10 Americans (adults and children) are not getting the recommended 3 servings of whole grain each day. At breakfast, cereal is the #1 source of whole grain. Cereal is particularly important for whole grain intake for kids and teens at breakfast, contributing over 50% of whole grain intake at breakfast.1

Who is Eating Ready-To-Eat Cereal?

Children ages 2-12 proportionally consume the most RTE cereal of any age group, with over 40% eating cereal on any given day.1

Children Who Eat Cereal Have Higher Nutrient Intakes and Overall Better Diets

Children who eat cereal get more of important nutrients, while not eating more calories, saturated fat, added sugar, or sodium.1 The chart below shows the percent difference between 2-18 year old children who eat cereal and those who do not eat cereal.

Percent difference between 2-18 year old children who eat cereal compared to those who didn’t eat cereal

- 72% more Vitamin D
- 69% more Iron
- 58% more Vitamin A
- 21% more Calcium
- 10% more Fiber
- 60% more Whole Grain
- 27-103% more B-Vitamins
Cereal Intake Encourages Milk Consumption

Overall, 88% of people consume cereal with milk, with the percent higher for teens and adults (90%) and slightly less for children (76% for young children and 83% for children 4-12 years old). The chart below shows the percentage of milk consumed with ready-to-eat cereal.2

### Table 1: Percentage of ready-to-eat cereal consumed with milk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>2-5 Y</th>
<th>4-12 Y</th>
<th>13-18 Y</th>
<th>19+ Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>1540</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>5076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ready-To-Eat Cereal Eaters Overall Consume More Dairy Products Than Non-Cereal Eaters

Chart 3: RTE cereal eaters consume at least 25% more dairy products than non-eaters2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RTE Non-Eaters</th>
<th>RTE Eaters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children 4-12 Y</td>
<td>2 servings/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens, 13-18 Y</td>
<td>2 servings/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults 19+ Y</td>
<td>1.5 servings/day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children Who Eat Cereal Do Not Have Higher Added Sugar Intake Than Children Who Do Not Eat Cereal

For children ages 2-5, there is no difference between added sugar intakes of cereal eaters and non-cereal eaters, but as children grow, you begin to see a difference.1 For children 13-18 years non-cereal eaters have significantly more added sugar intakes than cereal eaters.1 The chart below shows added sugar intake for cereal eaters and non-cereal eaters.

Chart 4: Added sugar intake between cereal eaters and non-eaters1

Summary:

- Ready-to-eat cereal eaters are ahead nutritionally. They have...
  - Higher quality diets
  - Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, dairy and good fats
  - Eat less sodium and added sugars
  - Get more nutrients and are more likely to have nutritionally adequate diets
- Ready-to-eat cereal encourages milk consumption
- Ready-to-eat cereal is a key source of whole grain
- Dietary guidelines recognize ready-to-eat cereal as an example of nutrient-dense foods that can fit into healthy eating patterns3

References:

1. NHANES 2013-2014
2. NHANES 2011-2012
3. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020