Objectives
Participants will:
1. Explain a health benefit provided by eating oats.
2. Describe how to purchase and store oats.
3. Describe how to cook oats.
4. Explain how to incorporate oats into family meals.
5. Prepare and taste food that includes oats.

Required Materials:
- Container or bag of steel cut oats to show class.
- Container or bag of oat groats (whole oats) to show class.
- Container or bag of regular rolled oats to show class.
- Container or bag of quick-cooking rolled oats to show the class.
- Container or bag of instant rolled oats to show the class.
- Container or bag of oat bran to show class.
- Container or bag of oat flour to show class.
- Ingredients and supplies needed to demonstrate and serve recipes (see pgs. 6-8).
- Lesson handouts – enough for all class participants (see pgs. 6-8).
- Required paperwork for program – enough for all class participants.

Optional Supplemental Materials:
- If the class is large make several bags of each oat variety so all participants get a chance to see each kind in a timely manner. If you cannot find all of the varieties of oats at a regular grocery store look for them at a health food store or online. You also have the option of bringing pictures of the ones you are unable to find at the store. The Whole Grains Council website resource listed at the end of this lesson has pictures of the different types of oats.

Preparation Required:
- Study lesson and practice food demonstration.
- Gather supplies and materials to demonstrate recipes (see pgs. 6-8).
- Prepare and cook the Crispy Granola and bring to class.
- Prepare Crunchy Oat Baked Chicken so that it is ready to be baked during class.
- Make copies of handouts and required paperwork – enough for all participants.
LESSON PLAN

Introduction:
Time: 2-3 minutes

- **Before class starts do the preparation needed to make the Crunchy Oat Baked Chicken (see recipe pg. 8). Combine the coating ingredients and have the chicken in a baking pan ready to place in the oven. Store chicken in the refrigerator until ready to place in the oven. Preheat to 375°F.**
- Welcome the class and thank them for making time to come.
- Briefly introduce yourself and the program.
- **Ask the class:** When you want a warm and comforting breakfast food what comes to mind?
- **Ask the class:** How many of you like to eat oatmeal for breakfast? Other meals?
- Oatmeal is one of the most popular whole grains in American diets, yet only 5% of the oats grown worldwide are actually consumed by humans.
- Samuel Johnson's 1755 dictionary defined oats as "A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland appears to support the people." The Scotsman's retort to this was, "That's why England has such good horses, and Scotland has such fine men!"
- Oatmeal is a fantastic way to gain the strength and energy to carry you through a hectic morning schedule. There is just something comforting and hearty about a steaming bowl of freshly cooked oatmeal! Let's learn more about this wonderful grain, oats!

Objective 1: Explain a health benefit provided by eating oats.
Time: 5-10 minutes

- **Ask the class:** Do any of you know the health benefit of eating oats?
  - One of the main health benefits of eating oats is their cholesterol lowering effect that helps reduce the risk of heart disease. This is due to the high amount of *soluble* fiber found in the oats.
  - There are two types of fiber – soluble and insoluble.
- **Ask the class:** Can anyone explain the difference between the two different types of fiber?
  - *Soluble Fiber:* Soluble fiber is unique because it attracts water and forms a gel during digestion. This gel slows digestion helping you to feel fuller longer and helps reduce cholesterol in your body, promoting heart health.
  - *In-soluble Fiber:* In-soluble fiber is important for bulk. It too helps you to feel full by filling up your stomach potentially aiding in weight management. The bulk created from in-soluble fiber also helps promote digestive regularity.
  - The unique characteristic of oats is that they contain substantial amounts of both soluble and in-soluble fiber.
  - Research suggests that eating 3 grams of soluble fiber a day is required to see a cholesterol lowering effect. 1½ cups of cooked oatmeal or ¾ uncooked has this amount of soluble fiber.
- There are a few other benefits of eating oats including:
  - Oats are higher in protein and healthy fats, and lower in carbohydrates than most other whole grains.
  - Oats are a good source of B vitamins. These vitamins help your body convert your food into energy and produce red blood cells.
- **Ask the class:** Are oats a source of whole grains?
- Yes, although oats are hulled, this process does not strip away their bran and germ allowing them to retain a concentrated source of their fiber and nutrients. Any form of oats (whole, cut rolled, or flour) are a whole grain.
- **Ask the class:** Which type of oats are best for you?
All forms of oats from whole to instant have basically the same nutritional value. The main difference is that the less processed forms of oats (oat groats and steel cut oats) take longer to digest and therefore stay in your stomach longer keeping you feeling full longer. Pre-steamed oats (rolled, quick-cooking) will digest and empty out of your stomach faster so that you get hungry faster.

Objective 2: Describe how to purchase and store oats.
Time: 10 minutes

- **Put Crunchy Oat Baked Chicken in the oven to bake.**
- **Ask the class:** How many different forms of oats are you familiar with? *Pass around bags of the different oat forms.*
  - **Oat groats:** the whole oat kernel with just the hull removed. They are good for using as a breakfast cereal or for stuffing. Oat groats can also be ground into fresh oat flour using your home mill.
  - **Steel-cut oats:** also called Irish, pinhead or Scottish oats that are produced by running the whole grain through steel blades that thinly slice them. Steel-cut oats have a dense, chewy texture with a stronger oat flavor than old-fashioned or quick-cooking oats. If you don’t like oatmeal because you think it is mushy and bland you may want to give steel-cut oats a try.
  - **Old-fashioned oats:** have a flat shape that is the result of their being steamed and then rolled. Rolled oats are still whole oats made from whole oat groats just with a little steaming and rolling to make them flat.
  - **Quick-cooking oats:** are steamed and rolled like old-fashioned oats; the difference is that they are steamed longer, are cut finely before rolling, and are rolled thinner. Steaming the oats longer and cutting them into smaller pieces makes them cook more quickly.
  - **Instant oats:** cut and rolled very fine and precooked. These have the mildest taste and texture of all oats.
  - **Oat bran:** the outer layer of the grain that resides under the hull. While oat bran is found in rolled oats (old fashioned, quick-cooking and instant) and steel-cut oats, it may also be purchased as a separate product that can be added to recipes or cooked to make a hot cereal.
  - **Oat flour:** used for thickening soups and stew and used in baking. It is oftentimes combined with wheat or other gluten-containing flours when making leavened bread. Note: Oat flour does not contain gluten so it must be combined with a gluten containing flour to make breads.

- **Start Cooking steel-cut oats on the stove-top.**
- **Ask the class:** What things are important to look for when buying oats?
  - When buying oats at the store it is recommended that you buy them in smaller quantities because of their higher fat content, which will cause them to go rancid more quickly.
  - Smell the oats to make sure that they are fresh. Fresh oats have a clean, sweet or grassy smell. Spoiled oats have a sharp, unpleasant odor. *Optional: Pass around a small jar of fresh oats for the participants to smell.*
  - Whether purchasing oats in bulk or in a packaged container, make sure there is no evidence of moisture.
  - If you are purchasing prepared oatmeal, check the label to make sure that it does not contain salt, sugar or other additives.
- **Ask the class:** How do you think that oats should be stored?
  - Rolled oats that are stored in an airtight container in a cool, dry, dark place and are not opened will keep for up to 8 years. Opened oats will store for about a year if placed in a cool, dry place.
  - Whole oat groats can be kept in a cool, dark place in an airtight container for up to 1 year.
  - Oats can be frozen for longer storage.
Objective 3: Describe how to cook oats.
Time: 5 minutes

- **Ask the class:** If you haven’t used oats in your cooking before, what are the reasons?
  - Don’t know how; takes too much time; never thought about adding oats.
- Different types of oats require slightly different cooking methods but are overall a very simple and versatile grain to prepare.
- To cook steel-cut oats or oat groats you will need about three parts water and one part oats. The basic cooking method is to boil the water, add the oats, reduce the heat, cover and simmer until water is absorbed and oats are tender.
- For old fashioned rolled oats and quick-cooking oats you will need about two parts water and one part oats. They can be cooked on the stovetop or in the microwave.
  - To cook on the stovetop bring water to boil, add oats, and simmer for 1-5 minutes, until water is absorbed and oatmeal is tender. Quick cooking or instant oats take less time than rolled oats.
  - To cook them in the microwave, add water to oatmeal and microwave on high 1-3 minutes or until water is absorbed. Stop and stir every minute while cooking.
- Whole oat groats and steel-cut oats can also be soaked overnight to decrease the cooking time. Add 1 cup of oats to three cups of water in a pot and soak overnight. In the morning bring the pot to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 5-6 minutes for steel-cut oats and 15-20 minutes for whole oat groats.

Objective 4 and 5: Explain how to incorporate oats into family meals. Prepare and taste food that includes oats.
Time: 20 minutes

- **Ask the class:** In what ways do you think oats can be added into meals for a family? Do any of you use oats in your cooking? If yes, do you have any tips for adding oats?
  - Oats may be added to cookie recipes, or added to meatloaf and hamburgers to make them go farther and enhance their juiciness.
  - Oats can be boiled into a creamy porridge or they can make a savory side dish such as a pilaf.
  - Add oat flour or whole oats the next time you make bread or muffins. Oat flour gives a unique sweet cakelike crumb to baked goods.
  - Sprinkle oat bran on your hot or cold cereal to boost your fiber intake and enhance the texture.
  - Oat groats make a great base for stuffing for poultry.
  - During class we started making some steel-cut oats. If you are not very fond of oatmeal but have never tried steel cut oats you may be surprised at the taste and texture of steel-cut oats. These oats have a more hearty texture and more oaty taste than rolled oats. **Explain how you cooked the steel-cut oats (see recipe on pg. 6).**
  - Plain oats are very versatile and you can add many toppings to them. **Demonstrate how to add one or two of the topping combinations from the handout to the steel cut oats (see Oatmeal Mix-ins pg. 7). You can even create your own combo.**
  - Oatmeal is great to use in baked goods such as bread, muffins, waffles or pancakes. **Demonstrate Oatmeal Nut Pancakes (see recipe pg. 7).**
  - Granola is a popular and tasty use for oatmeal but is often packed with lots of added fat and sugar. This granola recipe uses a small amount of honey to sweeten it as well as egg whites instead of oil to make it crunchy and decrease the excess fat. **Explain how to make Crunchy Granola (see recipe pg. 8).**
  - Oats can also make a great crispy coating on chicken and other dishes. This is a great alternative to frying chicken because it adds fiber and nutrition and little fat.
• We have the Crunchy Oat Baked Chicken in the oven. *Explain how to make Crunchy Oat Baked Chicken (see recipe pg. 8).*

**Conclusion: Summary**

**Time: 5 minutes**

• Oats are an amazing source of whole grains and are a delicious addition to many foods as well as a comfort food in a warm bowl of oatmeal. Try different forms of oats and ways to use them in cooking and find the way that you like best.
• Are there any questions from today’s lesson?
• *Let participants taste prepared recipes.*
• Thank the class for coming.

**References:**


Quaker Oats Company Website. Available at [www.quakeroats.com](http://www.quakeroats.com)

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Oats

Delicious and hearty energy!

Cooking Oats
Oats come in many different forms and vary in cooking times. The less the oat has been processed (steamed, rolled, or cut), the longer amount of time it will need to cook.

Most packages of oats will have detailed cooking instructions but the basic guidelines below will give you some general recommendations.

Old Fashioned or Quick Oats
Old fashioned and quick oats can be cooked in the microwave or on the stovetop. Generally, the ratio is about 2 cups of water to 1 cup of oats. The amount of water can vary based on the desired texture of the oatmeal. More water equals runnier and mushier oatmeal and less water results in a firmer texture.

Stove Top: Bring the water to a boil, add oatmeal, reduce heat and simmer 1-5 minutes.

Microwave: Add water and oats to a bowl. Microwave on high for 1-3 minutes. Stir every minute.

Cooking Oat Groats and Steel-Cut Oats
The ratio for cooking oat groats and steel cut oats is about 3 cups water to 1 cup of oats.

1 cup oat groats or steel cut oats
3 cups water
¼ teaspoon salt (optional)

In a medium pot bring water to a boil. Add oats and salt (if desired). Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes for steel cut oats and 45-55 minutes for oat groats. Avoid stirring during cooking. Turn off the heat and allow to sit, covered for 5-10 minutes. Remove lid, stir and serve. Add spices, sugar, chopped fruit, nuts, or other toppings of choice.

Short-Cuts
To reduce cooking time you can soak oat groats or steel-cut oats overnight. Place 1 cup oats in a heavy saucepan and cover with 3 cups of water. Leave to soak overnight. In the morning, add salt and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook with pan partially covered for 5 to 6 minutes for steel cut oats or 15-20 minutes for whole oat groats.

Oats are done when the water is absorbed and they are tender. Refrigerate leftovers. Oats reheat easily in the microwave.

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Oatmeal Mix Ins

Try these delicious mix-ins with your oat groats, steel cut oats, old fashioned oats, or quick-cooking/instant oats.

- Dash of brown sugar and drizzle of maple syrup or honey
- Fresh chopped apples and dried cranberries
- Fresh chopped bananas and a spoonful of peanut butter
- Sliced fresh or frozen strawberries with a splash of sugar and milk
- Fresh or frozen blueberries with chopped walnuts and a splash of sugar and milk
- Fresh or frozen blackberries with chopped almonds and a sprinkle of sugar
- Fresh or frozen diced peaches or mangoes with a dash of brown sugar
- Coconut shavings, banana, and pineapple pieces
- Graham cracker pieces and yogurt
- Fruit of choice and a dollop of yogurt
- Dash of brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves
- Dash of brown sugar and chopped pecans
- Raisins and a dash of cinnamon
- Handful of dried fruit, nuts, and a splash of milk
- Diced onions, carrots, celery, thyme, and lemon zest to make an oat pilaf

Oatmeal Nut Pancakes

1½ cups whole-wheat flour  2 tablespoons canola oil
2 teaspoons baking powder   2 tablespoons honey
½ teaspoon salt                 1 cup oats, uncooked
2 cups low-fat milk            1 cup pecans, finely chopped (optional)
2 eggs

Combine flour, baking powder, and salt in medium mixing bowl and mix well. Add in milk, eggs, oil and honey and mix until smooth. Stir in oats and pecans. Bake on non-stick griddle or one sprayed with cooking spray.

Yield: 8-10 pancakes.

The unique characteristic of oats is that they contain substantial amounts of both soluble and in-soluble fiber.

Soluble fiber is unique because it attracts water and forms a gel during digestion. This gel slows digestion helping you to feel fuller longer and helps reduce cholesterol in your body, promoting heart health.

In-soluble fiber is important for bulk. It too helps you to feel full by filling up your stomach potentially aiding in weight management. The bulk created from In-soluble fiber also helps promote digestive regularity.

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Crispy Granola
2 egg whites
¼ cup honey
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla
Dash salt
3 cups uncooked rolled oats
1 cup shredded coconut (optional)
½ cup sesame seeds (optional)
½ cup chopped walnuts or almonds (optional)
½ cup raisins or other dried fruit (optional)

Preheat oven to 325ºF. Spray a large, shallow baking pan with cooking spray, set aside. Put egg whites in large bowl and mix with fork until frothy. Stir in honey, cinnamon, and salt. Add oats and any other optional ingredients (except dried fruit) of choice. Stir until ingredients are well coated with egg mixture. Spread mixture on baking sheet. Bake 20-30 minutes or until mixture is golden brown, stirring every 5 minutes. Remove from pan, add dried fruit if using, and cool completely on wire rack until crispy and crunchy. Store in airtight container.

Crunchy Oat Baked Chicken
1 tablespoon canola oil
2 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
¾ teaspoon salt
1½ cups quick oats, uncooked
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon water
4 boned and skinned chicken breast halves (about 5-6 ounces each)
Chopped cilantro (optional)
Salsa (optional)

Heat oven to 375ºF. In a shallow bowl stir together oil, chili powder, garlic powder, cumin, and salt. Add oats and stir until evenly coated. In a second bowl beat egg and water with fork until frothy. Dip chicken in egg and water mixture, and then in the seasoned oat mixture. The chicken should be covered completely with the oats. Bake chicken for 30 minutes or until chicken is cooked through and oat coating is golden brown. Serve plain or garnished with cilantro and salsa (optional).

Oats that are stored in an airtight container in a cool, dry, dark place and are not opened will keep for up to 8 years. Opened oats will store for about a year if placed in a cool, dry place. Oats contain natural oils that may cause them to go rancid. They should smell clean, sweet, and grassy when you open the container. If they smell old, sour, and/or rancid, throw them out.

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