

# ARE YOU GETTING your oats?

Why this British staple is great for diabetes, cholesterol and weight loss

*Dr Carrie Ruxton, dietitian*

It's one of our home-grown cereals and we probably take it for granted. But oats really are one of the original super foods. New evidence backs up what Granny always seemed to know – that oats are pretty good for health. So, what's the secret to this humble food? And how can we get our oats every day?

Oats have been grown in the UK for centuries with nearly 1 million tonnes<sup>1</sup> produced in 2015, equivalent to 5000 bowls of porridge for every person in the country. To make the oaty products we're all familiar with, the grains need to go through various stages – cleaning, dehusking, steaming, rolling and cutting.

Most oat products like porridge, oatcakes, cereal bars and oatmeal, are wholegrain so they still possess all the goodness of the bran which is rich in fibre and minerals. Other products such as bread or oat milk contain oat flour and while these are still nutritious, they tend to be lower in fibre.

## MINERAL BOOST

As well as being a rich source of the B vitamins thiamin, niacin and folate, oats also provide vitamin E and the minerals

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