

## CHAPTER XI

### Cereals

CEREALS are of much importance as a food since they furnish about two-fifths of the fuel value of our diet, and about one-third of the protein. The cereal carbohydrate and fat are very valuable, but the cereal protein is not as valuable as is an equal weight of animal protein. Neither do grains contain sufficient protein material, so that it is well to cook or serve cereal products with whole or skimmed milk in order to make up their lack of protein.

Cereals may be purchased in the form of whole grains, flaked, puffed or shredded. Whole grain cereals are the most valuable as sources of minerals and vitamins. The following may be taken as types of these forms:

Whole—rice, barley, whole wheat, cracked wheat, cracked hominy.

Flaked—rolled oats, flaked wheat, flaked barley, flaked hominy.

Ground—cream of wheat, oat meal, corn meal, grits.

Puffed—puffed wheat, puffed rice, puffed corn.

Shredded—shredded wheat biscuit.

### *USES OF CEREALS*

Cereals have many uses other than for breakfast foods.

Cereals may be used as:

Breakfast foods.

Luncheon dishes—cracked hominy with cheese sauce.

Drop cakes—using flaked cereal for part of flour.

Puddings—rice, Indian, fruit.

Coffee—substitutes.

Gruels—in invalid cookery.

Made over dishes—

- a. Mush, hominy, farina, wheat cereals and rolled oats, moulded, sliced, dredged in flour or ground cereal, sauted and served with or without syrup.

- b. Left over cereals may be added to soups as a thick-

ening agent. A thick cereal batter may be dropped into soup for small dumplings.

- c. Muffins can be prepared by substituting cooked cereals for a part of the liquid and flour.
- d. Cereal griddle cakes can be made by substituting cereals for a part or all of the flour.
- e. Left over cereals may have left over chopped meats or vegetables stirred with it. Season well and pour out in a flat pan. When cold shape in croquettes, roll in egg and crumbs and fry in deep fat.

### *STORAGE OF CEREALS*

While cereals in bulk are much more economical than cereals in package form, yet it would be poor economy to buy them in bulk form and leave them exposed to dust and insects. Unfortunately, all cereals are very quickly infested with weevils and other insects, and for that reason should be carefully stored in both shop and home. Bulk cereals should be purchased from dealers who keep such products in sanitary containers, and as soon as they are brought into the home they should be labeled and kept tightly covered in a dry place.

### *GENERAL RULES FOR COOKING CEREALS*

All cereal food should be thoroly cooked to render the starch palatable and more easily digested. Long cooking also softens the outside cellulose of the whole grains. Cereals steam cooked in the process of manufacture require at least 20-30 minutes cooking to be easily digested.

The best method is to use a fireless cooker or a double boiler. All cereals should be cooked from two to three hours at least. Have water boiling, add 1 tsp. of salt. Milk may be used instead of water for liquid and such fruit as raisins, figs and dates may be cooked with cereal or added just before serving.

	Cereal	Liquid	Salt	Time
Whole grain	1 cup	8 cups	1 tsp.	5-6 hours
Cracked grains	1 cup	6 cups	1 tsp.	2-3 hours
Flaked	1 cup	2 cups	1 tsp.	1-2 hours
Steam cooked	1 cup	1½ cups	1 tsp.	20-30 minutes

*CEREAL RECIPES***OATMEAL GRUEL**

- |                    |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 4 tbsp. oatmeal    | 1 c. hot milk or part cream |
| 2 c. boiling water | Salt and sugar              |

Cover the oatmeal with the boiling water, place in a double boiler and cook gently two hours, adding salt to taste toward the end of the cooking. Remove from the fire and strain thru a very fine sieve or a piece of coarse cheesecloth. Add the hot milk or cream and serve at once, with toasted crackers or triangles of freshly toasted bread. If sugar is desired, add it, to the patient's taste. For a change add a few raisins, which have been washed, seeded and cooked for ten minutes in hot water, to the gruel just before serving.

**RICE**

Rice will absorb about three and one-half times its bulk of liquid. Put the water, rice and salt in a double boiler and let it cook until tender. It will take about 40 to 50 minutes. It should not be stirred after the grains have become softened as that will make it mushy looking. Rice may be steamed in custard cups for individual portions. Properly cooked rice should be thoroly tender, but each grain should be separate. Boiling rice is a quicker process. Use for this method about two quarts of water to each cupful of rice and three teaspoonfuls of salt. Have the water boiling rapidly when the rice is put in and keep it boiling rapidly thruout the cooking. This will keep the grains in motion so they will not stick together. Drain off the water, pour fresh boiling water over and drain again. The water which is drained off contains enough starch and mineral matter which has cooked out of the rice to make it of material food value. It makes a good basis for soups.

**TURKISH PILAF**

Put 1 c. of rice over a quick fire in about a quart of cold water and stir with a fork occasionally until the water boils; let boil rapidly 3 minutes, drain thru a fine sieve and let cold water run thru the rice. Have two cups and a half of broth and one cup of stewed and strained tomatoes boiling over the fire; add the blanched rice and half a teaspoonful or more of salt and let cook until the liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender. Add more liquid if needed. Cook directly over the fire or in a double boiler. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. of butter or clarified chicken fat and mix lightly with a fork.

**MACARONI A LA FLORENCE**

- |                       |                                    |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 c. dry macaroni     | 2 tbsp. chopped peppers            |
| 4 strips bacon        | 4 c. cooked tomato                 |
| 2 tbsp. chopped onion | Salt, pepper, sugar, grated cheese |

Cut four strips of bacon into small squares with a scissors. Brown the bacon carefully and remove from the fat. Into this

fat stir 2 tbsp. of chopped onion and cook slightly. Add 4 c. of cooked tomato, 2 tbsp. of chopped green peppers and the cooked bacon. Have ready a baking dish with the dry macaroni in it. Pour the tomato mixture over this and season with salt, pepper and enough sugar to remove the sour taste. Mix thoroly and bake in a slow oven (300° F.) for an hour. Before serving, sprinkle with grated cheese and return to oven until cheese is melted.

#### MACARONI

Boil macaroni in boiling salted water until raw taste is gone. Rinse with running cold water. Reheat in double boiler with cheese sauce, or gravy from meat or chicken. This is a good substitute for potatoes.

Spaghetti may be substituted for macaroni.

Vermicelli is used mostly in soups.