

Ms Nadiya Merchant- Associate Director Kellogg's India Private Ltd, spoke about "Power of Grains". She started by mentioning that grains are integral part of the Indian diet which includes wheat, rice, maize, finger millet, sorghum, foxtail millet and many others. Cereal, millets and pulses work complementary to each other when combined to provide most of the amino acids. She pointed out that cereals and millets are recommended by NIN to provide at least 40% of energy per day. She further compared whole grains, which have bran, endosperm and germ intact with refined grains. Whole grains are rich source of B vitamins, minerals, fibre, starchy carbohydrates, some proteins, Vitamin E, phytochemicals and healthy fats. Refined grains lose their nutrients as the bran and germ are stripped off during refining. Cereals help to prevent cardiovascular diseases, obesity, some types of cancers and Type 2 Diabetes by decreasing body fat and cholesterol and managing sugar levels. Substantial decrease in blood lipids was also noticed due to whole grain consumption owing to presence of viscous soluble fibre, nutrients like magnesium, folate and variety of phytochemicals and polyphenols

She added that according to many studies, diet rich in whole grains can reduce progression from impaired glucose tolerance to Type 2 Diabetes by up to 58%. Whole grain components like antinutrients phytic acid, saponins, amylase inhibitors decrease circulating glucose and insulin. High fibre in whole grains provides satiety and helps in controlling the weight. She suggested that to get maximum benefit, 3 servings of whole grains, in every meal will help in cognitive performance, promote overall metabolic health in addition to other health benefits mentioned earlier. So a cereal breakfast may be convenient to prepare and a good option to start the day with. She concluded that whole grains are environmentally friendly using less energy, land, water and have lower greenhouse gas intensities than animal foods.

In response to a query about pseudo-cereals she mentioned quinoa, amaranth etc. are pseudo-cereals which have amazing nutrient profile and people need to read up about different varieties of cereals available in the market and wisely incorporate them in the diet.