Rice is the staple for two-thirds of the world’s population. It is a wholesome and nutritious cereal grain — a complex carbohydrate that has iron, niacin, thiamin and folic acid. White rice contains 103 calories per half-cup serving. Brown rice has more fiber and is a source of whole grains.

When purchasing rice, remember that 1 pound of uncooked rice equals about 2 cups of cooked rice. White rice will keep almost indefinitely on the shelf if stored in a tightly covered container. Cooked white rice can be kept in the refrigerator for up to six days if covered.

### Cooking Rice

You can cook rice in two different ways: on the stove top or in the microwave.

#### On the Stove Top:

Combine 1 cup rice and 2 cups water in a saucepan with a tight fitting lid. You can add 1 teaspoon salt and 1 tablespoon butter or margarine if you would like. Heat to boiling; stir once or twice. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15 minutes. If rice is not quite tender or liquid is not absorbed, replace lid and cook 2 to 4 minutes longer. Fluff with a fork to allow steam to escape.

#### In the Microwave:

Place the above ingredients in a 2- to 3-quart microwave baking dish. Cover and cook on high for 5 minutes or until boiling. Reduce setting to MEDIUM (50% power) and cook 30 minutes. Fluff with fork.

### Cooking Brown Rice

1 cup uncooked brown rice  
2¼ cups liquid (water, broth, juice)  
1 tablespoon butter or margarine (optional)  
1 teaspoon salt (optional)

Note: 1 cup uncooked brown rice yields about 3 to 4 cups cooked rice.

### Variations

Now that you have the rice cooked, here are some quick stir-ins to jazz up that plain, white rice. Try adding these ingredients to 1 cup of cooked rice.

- **Spanish Rice** — Add 1¼ cups prepared salsa.
- **Vegetable Pilaf** — Add 1 beef or chicken bouillon cube to cooking water. Add 1 tablespoon soy sauce and 1 can of mixed vegetables.
- **Breakfast Rice** — Add 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon and 2 tablespoons raisins.
- **Rice with Broccoli** — Add 1 cup cooked fresh or frozen broccoli.
- **Emerald Isle Rice** — Add peas and finely chopped mint.
Chinese Rice
2 cups cooked rice
1 tablespoon oil
¼ cup chopped onion
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
10 ounces frozen vegetables of any type
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 egg
¼ teaspoon garlic
Saute onion and any chopped vegetables until crisp tender. Add cooked rice, soy sauce and egg. Stir fry until egg is cooked.

Rice and Vegetables
3 cups cooked rice
1 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 16-ounce can corn, drained
1 medium onion, chopped
½ cup shredded cheese
Mix rice, beans, corn and onion and season to taste with salt, pepper, garlic powder and cumin. Turn into a baking dish or 9-inch square pan. Heat in oven at 350°F for 20 minutes. Sprinkle cheese over top and bake for 5 more minutes or until cheese is melted.

Mexican Rice
2 tablespoons canola oil
1 cup long-grain white rice
½ cup finely chopped onion
¼ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
1 ½ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth
½ cup frozen mixed vegetables (such as corn, peas and carrots), thawed
Heat a large heavy saucepan with a tight-fitting lid over medium heat. Add oil and rice and cook, stirring, until the rice is just beginning to brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Add onion and salt and cook, stirring, until the onion begins to soften, about 2 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 minute more. Pour tomato sauce over the rice and cook, stirring, for 1 minute.

Stir in broth and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover and cook until the rice is cooked, about 15 minutes. Stir in vegetables and serve.

Brown Rice Variation: Use 1 cup long-grain brown rice and 1 3/4 cups broth. In Step 2, simmer for 45 minutes. Remove the rice from the heat and let stand, covered, for 15 minutes before adding the vegetables.

Chicken or Turkey and Rice Casserole
2 cups leftover chicken or turkey
¼ cup butter or margarine
½ cup onion, chopped
½ cup flour
2 cups low-sodium chicken stock or water (add a chicken bouillon cube, if you have one)
2 cups leftover vegetables or one can of any vegetable
3 cups cooked rice
salt and pepper to taste
½ cup bread crumbs or cracker crumbs
2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese or cheddar cheese
Place butter in skillet and add onions: saute until onion is soft. Add flour, mixing well. Add chicken stock or water and cook until thick and bubbly. Stir in chicken or turkey, rice and vegetables. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Turn into a greased casserole dish or 9×13-inch pan. Mix bread crumbs with cheese and sprinkle over the top. Bake at 350°F for 30 minutes or until heated through.