

Have No Fear, Carbs Are Here!

A lesson all about carbs and their importance for fueling your body.

What is a carb?

- 1 of 3 main nutrients found in our foods and drinks.
- Our body breaks down carbs into glucose (sugar).
 - This sugar is used as the main source of energy for our cells, tissues, and organs.



Functions of carbs

- Controls blood sugar and insulin metabolism
- Provides and stores energy
- Builds other macronutrients
- Triggers hunger and fullness cues
- Brain functionality
- ...and more!



Types of Carbs

Carbohydrates

Simple

- Easily and quickly digested
- Some sources have health benefits

Sugars

- Most basic form of carbohydrates
- Added vs. natural

Complex

- Slower digestion rate
- Releases glucose into bloodstream slower

Starches

- Most abundant and relevant to the human diet
- Some are valuable for digestion and gut health

Fibers

- Plant-based compounds that are not fully digested
- Many health benefits

Sugars



- Fruits and fruit juice
- Vegetables
- Dairy
- Honey
- Maple syrup
- Sugar
- Candy
- Soda

Starches



- Oats
- White and brown rice
- Corn
- Peas
- Beans
- Lentils
- Potatoes (white and sweet)
- Squash
- Grain products

Fibers



- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole grains
- Beans
- Lentils
- Nuts
- Seeds

Low-Carb Diets

< 130g/day

- Pros:
 - Short-term weight loss
 - Blood sugar control
 - Decreased mortality and cardiovascular risk (if consuming plant-based fats and proteins)
- Cons:
 - Brain fog and irritability
 - Nutrient deficiencies
 - Can be high in saturated fat
 - Unhealthy relationship with food
 - Typically not sustainable

In Conclusion...

- Carbs are important to include in your daily diet.
- Focus on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, dairy, nuts, and seeds.
- It is okay to allow yourself some simple carbs in the form of added sugars.
- Make sure you're including adequate amounts of complex carbs so your body can perform all its amazing functions!

Additional Resources

1. <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/carbohydrates>
2. <https://www.nutritionnews.abbott/healthy-living/diet-wellness/carbohydrates-the-role-they-play-and-why-you-need-them/>

