

CONTROLLING YOUR CARBOHYDRATE INTAKE

One of the categories of food we use to fuel our bodies. The two forms of carbohydrates are sugars (fructose, glucose, and lactose) and starches (peas, corn, potatoes).

Carbohydrates are found in bread, pasta, fruits, vegetables, snack foods, processed foods, and most beverages. Carbohydrates serve as a primary energy source in our bodies. They provide energy for working muscles, fuel for the central nervous system, enable fat metabolism, and prevent the use of protein for energy.



How Carbohydrates act in the body: They are the body's preferred source of energy. All carbohydrate are converted into sugars in the body and absorbed by the bloodstream. This causes an increase in blood glucose. As a response the pancreas releases the hormone insulin. Insulin is needed to move sugar from the blood into the cells, where it then can be stored in the muscles and liver as a source of energy.

High-quality carbohydrates: These consist of the complex carbohydrates that will slow the increase of blood glucose and contain fiber to keep you feeling full. Foods such as whole grain breads, oatmeal, and starchy vegetables contain these high-quality carbohydrates.

Low-quality carbohydrates to avoid: These consist of simple carbohydrates that are low in fiber, spike blood glucose, and leave you feeling hungry. These are found in sugary processed goods and are best avoided or eaten in moderation

Differences Between Complex and Simple Carbohydrates!

Complex Carbohydrates

Refined, processed foods (low fiber)

- “Enriched wheat flour” breads and cereals
- White rice
- White pasta

Whole Grains (high fiber)

- “whole” wheat or grain breads and cereals, pasta
- Oats, brown and wild rice
- Beans, peas, whole vegetables and fruits

Simple Carbohydrates

Added sugars (sodas, breakfast cereals, baked goods, desserts, candies)

- White table sugar
- Molasses
- Brown sugar
- Honey
- High fructose corn syrup

Naturally occurring sugars

- Fruit sugar
- Milk sugar



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