



MINDFUL SCOOP

Meth-Wick Community

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Carbohydrates and your Health

A common nutrition myth is that those trying to lose weight should avoid carbohydrates. What's the truth— should you avoid all carbohydrates or just certain ones? Some basic nutrition knowledge can help you determine fact from fiction when reading about the latest diet fad.

What is a carbohydrate: Carbohydrates are the body's preferred source of fuel and provide a variety of vitamins, minerals and fiber. Carbohydrates are a food source that break down into glucose. Your body can use it immediately for energy or store it in your liver, muscles and other cells. Carbohydrates may protect against cardiovascular diseases, obesity, and diabetes.

Types of carbohydrates

- **Sugars** can be naturally occurring in foods like fruit and milk or added to foods like candy, baked goods, and soft drinks. Small amounts of added sugars are okay but there is no benefit to them. ***The Dietary Guidelines recommends limiting added sugars to less than 10% of calories per day.***
- **Starches** are found in plant based foods such as corn, potatoes, beans, rice and other grain products.
- **Dietary fiber** is the indigestible part of plant foods that may help with digestion and heart health. Fiber occurs naturally in whole grains, and beans and peas.



Focus on carbohydrates from nutrient rich whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans. Foods and beverages with added sugars should be consumed sparingly.

Recommendations for carbohydrate goals will vary from person to person. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend consuming a variety of foods that are good sources of dietary fiber, consuming at least half of grains as whole grains, and limiting the intake of refined grains and products made with refined grains.

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