

carbs & body weight

Low, high or “No” carbs?



The Low-Carb diet craze created more than it's fair share of confusion over the role that carbohydrates play in weight loss. Carbohydrates are one of the three macronutrients meaning that we need relatively large amounts of them to be healthy. Since weight loss is all about cutting calories without cutting nutrition, it's not wise to eliminate or excessively cut carbohydrates. Let's explore a better, healthier approach.

The key is to watch your calorie intake, while consuming your daily recommended amount of carbohydrates. Moderate your intake of refined carbs because they have no nutritional value. Choose plenty of nutrient-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy products. Here are some pointers.

- Avoid over-consumption of refined carbs and carb products like sugar, sodas, white flour, baked goods, candies, sweets and the like. These are best consumed in moderation, when your daily caloric needs have been met nutritionally, without exceeding your ideal daily calorie intake.
- Alcoholic beverages contain carbohydrates and calories. So remember to moderate.
- Choose a whole fruit instead of fruit juice.
- Read the ingredients on the labels to know what you are buying. “White”, “enriched”, and “wheat” flours are all refined carbohydrate sources. “Whole” wheat or grains are better unrefined choices.
- Use whole-grain breads for lunch or snacks. Check the label to make sure that whole wheat or another whole grain is the first ingredient listed.
- Instead of potatoes with your dinner, try brown rice or peas. Or experiment with grains you've never had like bulgur, cracked wheat, millet, lentils or hulled barley. You may be pleasantly surprised and may find them as a new source of dining pleasure.
- Pick up some whole wheat pasta. If the whole-grain products are too chewy for you, look for those that are made with half whole-wheat flour and half white flour.
- Beans are an excellent source of slowly digested carbohydrates as well as a great source of protein.
- Unsweetened fruits and vegetables are highly nutritious sources of unrefined carbohydrates.
- Eat some lean protein along with carbohydrates. This helps regulate the speed at which your body digests the carbohydrates, and helps to stabilize your energy level and reduce “bad” carb cravings.

For more information about carbohydrates see other documents and information available on our website.