



Nutrition Education



Carbohydrates Choices

Despite the bad rap carbohydrates have received in the past, carbohydrates are essential for a healthy diet. Carbohydrates are needed by the body because they contain glucose which is a primary energy source. As we age, making healthy food choices becomes very important and here is how you can choose the healthiest carbs for you!

Choose Wisely

- When reading labels, look for whole grains listed as the first ingredients when choosing grain or pasta products.
- Balance your plate with half of your food coming from fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ whole grains and $\frac{1}{4}$ protein.



Sources:
The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Created by Heather Cuellar, RD

Presented by Becky Bruno,
Senior Services Project Coordinator

July 2024

What foods contain carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates can be found in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, pastas, rice, dairy, candy, table sugar, cereals, breads, tortillas, honey, syrup, and many more.

How to make wise carbohydrate choices?

When trying to choose healthy carbohydrates the goal is to choose the most nutrient dense ones. This means they contain vitamins, fiber, minerals, and they are low in added sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats.

Fiber is commonly found in most carbohydrate foods. Fiber provides digestive health, promotes a healthy weight, offers heart protective factors, and helps with blood sugar control. It is important to prioritize fiber when making carbohydrate choices.

Eat more Complex Carbs: Legumes, barley, whole grain pasta, rolled oats, brown rice, whole grain bread, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, low fat dairy, unsweetened yogurt, whole grain crackers.



Avoid or Limit Simple Carbs: Soda, candy, white breads, pastries such as cookies, cakes, and doughnuts, juices, and sweetened cereals.

Fun Fact! Did you know that carbohydrates are the number one energy source for the brain and body?