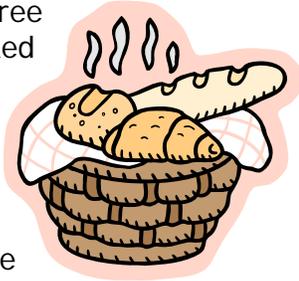


Carbohydrates

What Are Carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates come in two basic forms: complex and simple. Simple carbohydrates are one, two, or three units of sugar linked together in simple molecules. Complex molecules are hundreds or thousands of sugar units linked together in single molecules. Simple carbohydrates are easily identifiable by their sweet taste, whereas complex carbohydrates, such as potatoes, have a pleasant taste but are not sweet.



There are two groups of complex carbohydrates: high fiber and low fiber. High fiber, complex carbohydrates are not digestible by humans because we do not have the right enzyme to break them down. These indigestible carbohydrates are called cellulose.

Carbohydrates in Your Diet

High fiber foods are the healthiest choices for human nutrition. Consumption of these foods is associated with lowered incidences of hypertension, cancer, arthritis, and diabetes.

Simple sugars and low fiber complex carbohydrates become a health threat when they are consumed in large amounts. This often occurs in low-soy, vegetarian diets where carbohydrates are eaten to replace calories that would come from protein in a non-vegetarian diet.

Complex carbohydrates, high in fiber, should be consumed according to the guidelines of the Food Guide Pyramid for maximum health and vitality. These carbohydrates are rich

sources of necessary vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and fiber.

Health Risks of Excess Carbohydrates

- Generalized vascular disease
- Hypertension
- Heart disease
- May increase cancer risks
- High blood sugar

Sources of Complex Carbohydrates

- Breads, cereals, and rice
- Corn
- Broccoli
- Potatoes
- Apples
- Strawberries
- Bananas
- Lettuce

Sources of Simple Carbohydrates

- Table sugar
- Honey
- Brown sugar
- Milk
- Baked goods
- Highly processed foods

Remember...

Do not make foods high in simple carbohydrates a large part of your diet. Focus on consuming high fiber complex carbohydrates in the form of fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals, and rice to round out a healthy diet.

