



Eat Well !

Carbohydrates

As the major source of energy for your body, carbohydrates can be a complicated topic in today's diet culture. Carbohydrates are found in your diet in a variety of foods, and are broken down in the digestive process to single sugar molecules (glucose). That is simple enough. The complicated part comes from popular trends of diets high in protein and low in carbohydrates, and in knowing the difference between carbohydrates that benefit our health and those that provide empty calories.

Fiber:
The non-digestible component of carbohydrates. Fiber provides many health benefits including reducing the risk of many chronic diseases.

THE CURRENT RECOMMENDATION IS FOR ADULTS TO **CONSUME 20-35 GRAMS OF DIETARY FIBER EACH DAY.**

Whole grains are best for your health. Use and choose grains such as:
WHOLE WHEAT, BROWN RICE, WHOLE OATS, BARLEY, QUINOA, AND BULGUR

Limit foods containing refined & processed carbohydrates:

- White flour breads
- Refined cereal products
- Sugar sweetened drinks
- Candy
- White rice
- White flour pasta

Eat whole foods containing high-fiber carbohydrates:

Whole wheat	Fruits
Brown rice	Vegetables
Whole oats	Nuts
Barley	Seeds
Quinoa	Legumes
Wheat bran	Bulgur

GLYCEMIC INDEX: A system to classify carbohydrate containing foods that considers the blood sugar impact of that food. The **GLYCEMIC LOAD** further classifies these foods as high, medium, or low based on how likely a food is to create a blood glucose 'spike'. The **GLYCEMIC LOAD** is determined by multiplying the amount of carbohydrates in the food by the glycemic index.

Glycemic load* for selected foods:

High	Medium	Low
Baked Potato	Brown Rice	High-fiber Fruits & Vegetables
Refined Cereals	Whole Grain Breads	Bran Cereals
Candy & Sugar drinks	100% Fruit Juice	Cooked Legumes (dry beans)

*Glycemic load categorization adapted from Foster-Powell K, Holt SH, Brand-Miller JC. International table of glycemic index and glycemic load values: 2002. [Am J Clin Nutr](#) 2002; 76:5-56.