

Simple guide to Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates (also called carbs) are a macronutrient just like proteins and fats. Sugars, starches, and fiber are essential nutrients that your body turns into glucose to give you energy.

- **Sugars** are simple carbs that are broken down quickly. Sweet foods and drinks can have natural or added sugars. The body can't recognize the difference. Managing sugars can be helpful for weight loss and diabetes.
- **Starches** are complex carbs and take longer to break down into glucose and include grains, beans, and vegetables like potatoes and corn. Starches typically have more vitamins and minerals than sugary foods but still must be managed for diabetes.
- **Fiber** is found in plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole-grain products. Animal products, including dairy products and meats, have no fiber. Fiber is a complex healthy carbohydrate. Your body can't break down fiber. Most of it passes through the intestines, stimulating and aiding digestion. Fiber also regulates blood sugar, lowers cholesterol and keeps you feeling full longer.

QUESTIONS?

Call Beth McKinney, Registered Dietitian

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