

Carbohydrate

Carbohydrates are your body's preferred energy source.

Carbohydrates are broken down by the body to make blood sugar, also known as glucose. Glucose fuels our body and brain.

The two forms of carbohydrate in foods are:

Simple Carbohydrate (sugar)	Complex Carbohydrate (starch)
<p>Added sugars (in sodas, breakfast cereals, baked goods, frozen desserts, candies, and other sweets)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White table sugar (100% sucrose) • Brown sugar • Honey • Molasses • High-fructose corn syrup • Concentrated fruit juice sweetener <p>Naturally occurring sugars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit sugar (fructose) • Milk sugar (lactose) 	<p>Refined, processed foods (low fiber)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Enriched wheat flour" breads and cereals • White rice • White pasta • Instant and French-fried potatoes <p>Whole foods (high fiber)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Whole" wheat or grain breads and cereals • Oats, brown and wild rice, whole wheat pasta • Beans, peas, whole vegetables, and fruits

Sugars (when added to foods) are a more concentrated form of carbohydrate and calories. Naturally occurring simple sugars are found in more nutritious foods, such as fruit and milk. It's better to get your simple sugars from foods like fruit and milk because they also contain vitamins, fiber, and important nutrients like calcium. Added sugars have few (if any) vitamins or minerals. They just increase calories!





Whole pieces of fruit and **complex carbohydrates** in grains and vegetables are great sources of fiber and water, which makes them more bulky, filling you up without extra calories. Limit using refined grains, such as white flour and white rice, as these have been processed.

This removes nutrients and fiber and concentrates calories.

To increase complex carbohydrates and healthy nutrients:

- Eat vegetables and fruits.
- Eat whole grain rice, breads, and cereals.
- Eat legumes (beans, lentils, and dried peas).
- See the “Grains” MOVE!® Handout for additional information.

