

CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrates are found in a variety of foods and come in a variety of forms. The most abundant forms are sugars, fibers, and starches. The basic building block of every carbohydrate is a sugar molecule (carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen). Glucose (a simple carbohydrate) serves as the body's primary energy source and plays a crucial role in the proper functioning of the brain cells, nerve cells, and red blood cells.

Carbohydrate Absorption

Although all carbohydrates contain 4 calories per gram, not all carbohydrates are created equal. The absorption rate of glucose from carbohydrates plays an important role in how the body uses the energy from the carbohydrate.

When large amounts of simple sugars are eaten without other nutrients (fiber, fat or protein), they enter the blood stream VERY RAPIDLY and are transformed into triglycerides and stored as fat.

For example, calories from a 200 calorie soda would be absorbed differently than 200 calories from fruit and cottage cheese. The calories from the soda are absorbed more quickly and are more likely to be transformed into triglycerides and stored as fat!

Low Carbohydrate Diets

When a person wants to shed a few pounds, they generally look to high protein, low carbohydrate diets as the answer. While they generally lose weight initially, the long term outcomes are not so promising....and here's why:

High Protein/Low Carbohydrate Diets Destroy Your Metabolism.

- When you don't give your body glucose from carbohydrates, it must make its own....and it does this by breaking down muscle tissue. The breakdown of muscle tissue leads to a slower metabolism.

High Protein/Low Carbohydrate Diets Lack the Recommended Amount of Fiber

- Fiber helps slow starch breakdown and delay glucose absorption. It also gives us a "full feeling" by mixing with liquid to form a gelatinous mass.

High Protein/Low Carbohydrate Diets are Difficult to Maintain

- People who restrict calories and carbohydrates tend to lack energy and be more irritable/cranky because they are depriving their brain and nervous system of energy.