

The Carb Debate Are Carbohydrates Good for You or Not?

by Evelyn Kissinger

The answer is simple ... and complex—carbs that is. Complex carbohydrates provide energy, especially for the brain. Complex carbohydrates also provide essential fiber and life-giving nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and plant proteins while enhancing your immune system. They provide phytochemicals that not only protect cells from damage, but also help to heal damaged cells.

Complex carbohydrates control your appetite. They help you reach and maintain your healthy weight while reducing risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Soluble fiber found in oatmeal, barley, beans, apples, and oranges, help reduce cholesterol and balance blood sugar levels.

So, what about the popular high-protein/low carb weight-loss diets everyone is talking about? Do they work? Yes, you will probably lose weight, but you may be losing more than that. Here's the scoop.

1. Your body needs glucose to function. The best way to get it is from carbohydrates. If you use up your reserves, your body will get the needed glucose from protein. It will actually break down muscles to make glucose. You don't want to lose muscle weight to glucose because the more muscle you have, the more calories you burn, and the better you look and feel. Another reason is that when protein is made into glucose, the extra urea and nitrogenous wastes overtax your kidneys.

2. Protein is high in phosphoric acid. Excess protein can make the blood too acidic. Your body will need higher levels of calcium to balance the blood and will actually rob needed calcium from your bones, compromising bone health.

3. The high protein diets are high in saturated fats which are hard on arteries, raise blood cholesterol, and compromise vascular and brain health. These fats are prone to oxidation and the formation of free radicals which can destroy cells, damage DNA, increase risk of cancer, and accelerate the disease process and aging.

So, if these fad diets are so unhealthy, why are so many people on them, and why are people saying carbohydrates are bad? The bad rap comes from simple carbohydrates. People may benefit on the low carbohydrate diets because they stop eating sugar and refined white flour products.

Our bodies and brains were designed to get energy from complex carbohydrates like beans, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Does it really make sense to quit eating the very foods the Creator designed for our health?

You can go on a low simple carbohydrate diet and enjoy weight loss and good health. Simply avoid foods that are packaged with refined and processed sugars and flours. Replace them with the complex, high-fiber carbohydrates. Choose healthy fats like nuts, seeds, olives, and avocados.

With this combination, you'll get energizing health-promoting vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and antioxidants that will keep you healthy, trim, and jazzed—just like your Creator designed.

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