

NUTRIFAX[©]

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Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the primary component of many plants. Animal tissue has very little carbohydrate. Most of the carbohydrate eaten is converted to glucose which is essential in providing energy, and helps the brain and nerves function.

Types of Carbohydrates

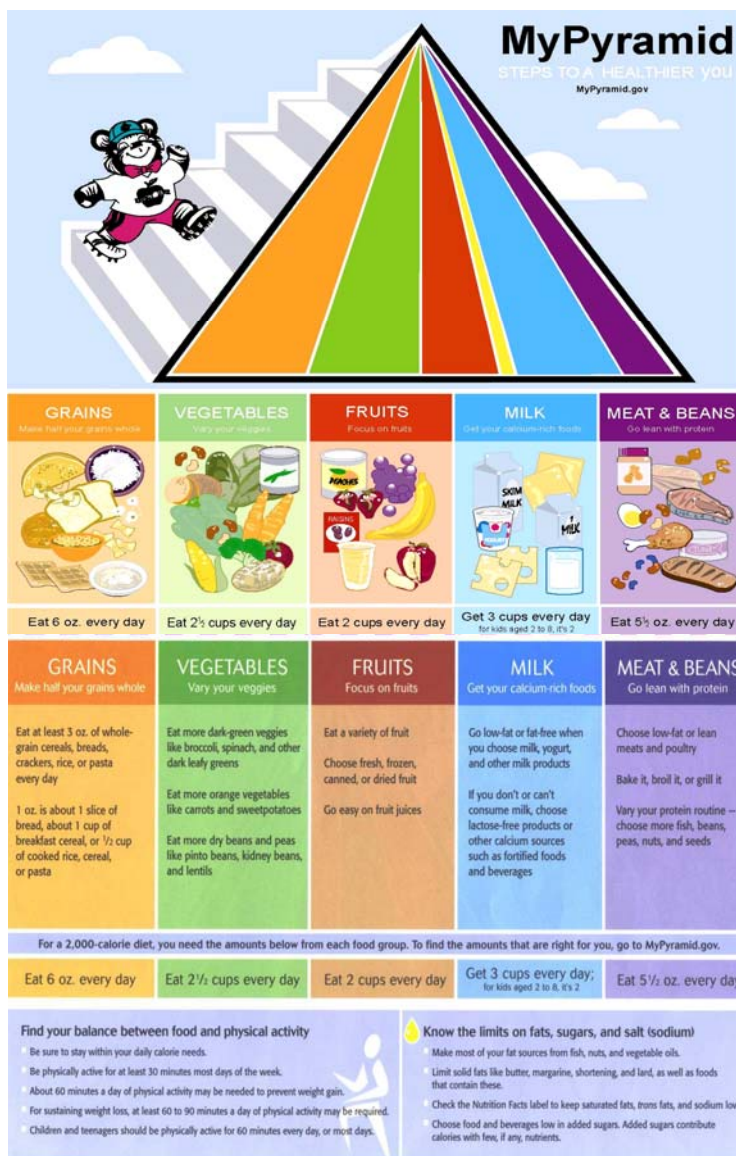
Simple carbohydrates such as glucose, fructose, and sucrose have a sweet taste. They are found naturally in fruits, honey (glucose and fructose) and table sugar (sucrose). Lactose (milk sugar) is found naturally in milk. No one sugar is better or worse for you than another. A health effect of sugar is tooth decay.

Complex carbohydrates are starch and fiber. Starch is found in grain products such as pasta, dried beans and lentils. Vegetables and some fruits, like bananas, convert starch to sugar as they ripen. Starch is not as fattening, as some people believe. It is the added ingredients such as butter, salad dressing and cream cheese that increase the calories and the fat.

Simple Carbohydrates	Complex Carbohydrates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sweetened soft drinks sweetened juices sugar in beverages candy sweetened cereal syrup, jelly cakes and cookies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cooked cereal unsweetened cereal breads pasta, rice dried beans potatoes fruits vegetables

Fiber

Complex carbohydrates add fiber to the diet. There is evidence that suggests fiber may help protect against colon cancer and lower blood cholesterol. Foods that contain fiber include cereals, dried beans, fruits, vegetables and some nuts.



What Carbohydrates Do You Eat?

Try to eat at least 4 items from the complex carbohydrate group each day (fruits, vegetables, grains and fruits).

Food and Nutrition Services can assist in providing nutrition information. Call 703-813-4800 and ask for a Registered Dietitian.