EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CARBOHYDRATES AND WHY THEY SHOULD MATTER

Written by Gail Collins and Katy Magazine's Editors

Carbs are sugar molecules which are broken down to create fuel for the body. Dr. Roxanne Woods of ER Katy explains, "Once broken down to the smallest sugar, glucose, they are taken into our cells and used to make ATP, or adenosine triphosphate - our energy molecule. Carbohydrates are our body's preferred fuel source. In fact, the brain and red blood cells can only use glucose as its energy source. The rest of our body can use fats for energy, but prefers carbs."

CARBS ARE EVERYWHERE

Carbohydrates are not just bread, rice, or pasta - all of the following foods are examples of carbohydrates:

COMPLEX CARBS



Vegetables & Fruits



Nuts & Seeds



Whole Wheat Breads & Cereals

Complex carbs are found in raw fruits and vegetables, beans, and whole-grain cereals and breads. These have long sugar chains, which slowly break down for a consistent burn of fuel for cells so that you will feel full longer. The more complex the carb the more likely that it will not be stored as fat.

WHY ARE THEY HEALTHY?

- √ High in fiber & nutrients
- √ Low glycemic index
- √ Help you feel full with fewer calories
- √ Naturally stimulate metabolism

SIMPLE CARBS



Rice & Pastas



Juice & Soda



Candy & Desserts

Simple carbs make up candy, juice, and processed cereals or breads, which your body breaks down into sugar molecules quickly and spike sugar in the bloodstream. This triggers an insulin response to store the nutrients in fat. This sugar or fuel is rapidly spent, making us hungry quicker.

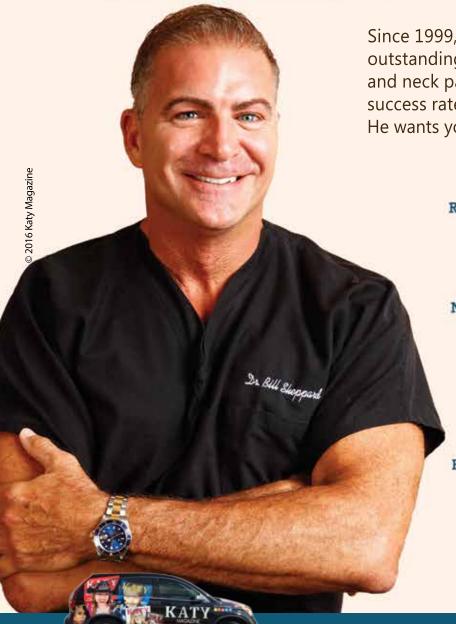
WHY ARE THEY NOT AS HEALTHY?

- √ Low in fiber & nutrients
- √ High glycemic index
- \checkmark Empty calories converted to fat
- √ High Blood Glucose Levels = Feeling Tired

So while carbs sometimes get a bad rap, they're actually an important part of a healthy diet and provide energy for your body. Get the most out of your carbohydrates by limiting added sugars and processed foods, incorporating a variety of plant-based foods, and choosing low-fat dairy products.

Katy's Back & Neck Pain Expert

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