



REAL FOOD CARBS

REAL FOOD RESCUE

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates have been the topic of the health world for years. One year they are healthy (hello Food Pyramid) and one year they are the thing to avoid. So what is a real foodie to do? Well, carbohydrates are essential for life and are known as one of the three macronutrients (the other two are fat and protein). This means that we are meant to eat carbohydrates and should consume the real food variety (aka fruits and vegetables) in our diets. The problem comes when we eat the wrong types of carbohydrates and in the wrong proportions. So let's focus on quality and then determine our own quantity.

What are carbohydrates?

They are macronutrients made out of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. Sounds complex? Well let's make it more simple. Carbohydrates are a fuel source (fast-acting) that are broken down into sugar (glucose) in the body and are either used immediately for fuel if you are active or stored in your body as either a) glycogen (stored fuel for later) in muscles and the liver or b) fat. Your body only has limited storage room in your liver and your muscles so once that is all used up it must be stored as fat throughout the body. This fat takes the form of triglycerides (fat stored in the bloodstream) or as adipose tissue (fat stored throughout the body).

What about fiber?

Dietary fiber is a type of carbohydrate that is indigestible in the digestive tract. There are two types of fiber insoluble and soluble. Both play a role in aiding with proper digestion (see our digestive health for more information). Insoluble fiber draws water into the fecal matter, increasing its volume and speeding up transit time through the digestive system (aka relieving constipation). Soluble fiber forms gel like bulk that slows down transit time and can bind nutrients (like cholesterol) to slow down and decrease their absorption in the digestive tract. It is important to get enough fiber in our diets and what's great is that fruits and vegetables can provide this for us if we eat enough throughout the day!

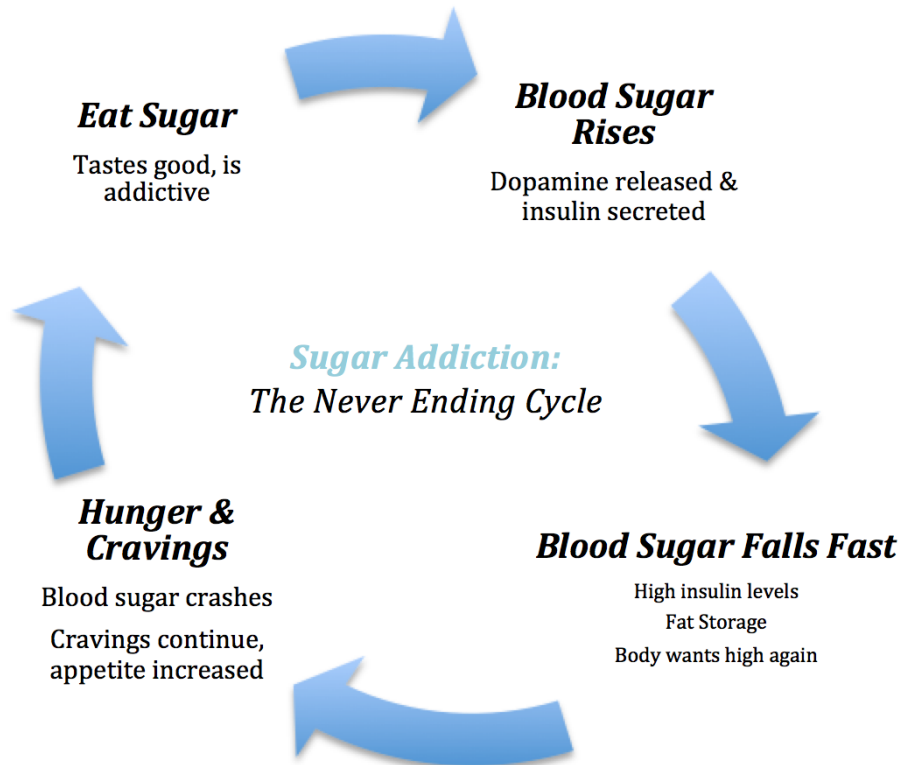
Why do we need them:

For energy! That's right. Carbohydrates are needed for energy; especially in high intensity exercise activities that last longer than five minutes (think Crossfit like activities). We as a society, however, have been overusing carbohydrates because they are highly palatable, cheap and convenient.

However, carbohydrates are not our body's preferred fuel source. While we may think it is, it actually prefers to run on fat. Unfortunately we are consuming a constant stream of carbohydrates (in the form of mostly refined sugars, think breads, pastas, cookies, etc.) and we never give our bodies the chance to become fat-adapted.



Do you ever get the 2pm crash at work? You feel like you need to take a nap or worse you want to snap at everyone and everything. This is when your blood sugar dips low and tells you that you NEED more sugar to get you through the last few hours of work. You are addicted to sugar. If you start eating an appropriate amount of carbohydrates in the form of fruits & vegetables and replace a lot of the refined carbohydrates with healthy fats (see our fats section) you will soon teach your body to rely on fat for fuel when you do not have that quick access to sugar.

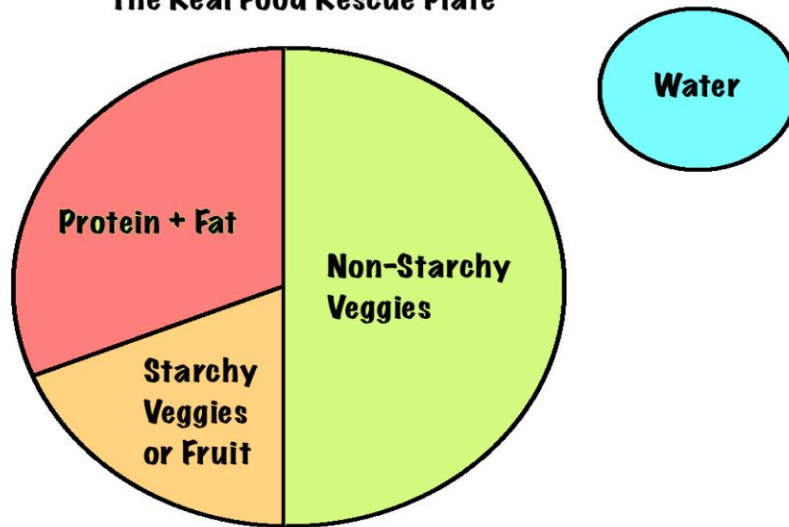


How we should consume them:

Carbohydrates should be a part of our balanced plate. Think about filling your plate half full with vegetables at every meal. This half should be filled with non-starchy vegetables (i.e. broccoli, lettuce, carrots, celery, peppers, etc.). Then leave about ¼ of your plate for starchy vegetables (or fruit) and the rest for protein & healthy fats. If you consider yourself to be highly active or you have high stress levels or you are pregnant or breastfeeding you may need more carbohydrates.



The Real Food Rescue Plate



What do we recommend?

While there are many temptations in the form of refined carbohydrates like cookies, pasta, bread and cupcakes we do not recommend you consume any while on the Real Food Rescue program. These are things that can be added back post program but should be done so on a very (and we mean VERY) limited basis, if at all. These refined carbohydrate foods lack nutrient density and instead lead to inflammation and not to mention sugar addiction.

For the program (and beyond) think of your VEGETABLES and your FRUITS as your main sources of carbohydrates. For this program we recommend consuming a moderate amount of carbohydrates from fruits and vegetables within the ranges of 75 -150 grams per day. This amount of carbohydrates depends on many factors including: sex, activity level, chronic diseases, stress levels, pregnancy/breastfeeding etc. You will need to experiment to find which level of carbohydrate fuels you best.

What about sugar?

When we discuss carbohydrates in The Real Food Rescue, we are talking about the nutrient rich carbohydrates that are fruits and vegetables. They are not only an important macronutrient they also contain plenty of micronutrients (vitamins & minerals), antioxidants and phytonutrients. All of these help to nourish the body while the sugar found in refined carbohydrates and in any added sugar is void of nutrients and actually pull nutrients from the body in order to help them be digested and absorbed.



Fun Facts about Sugar:

- In 1700 the average person consumed **4 pounds** of sugar/year
- In 2009 that number increased to **180 pounds** of sugar/year ** 64 pounds of that is HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP!**
- The average American consumes **22 teaspoons** of sugar/day
- Low Fat Foods use **sugar** to enhance flavor
- Many foods have **hidden sugar** like ketchup, dressings, hotdogs, bread, peanut butter, fries, sauces, etc.
- **Brown Rice Syrup** = SUGAR

What happens when you have too much sugar:

- Mood swings
- Low energy
- Low libido (aka no sex drive)
- Poor sleep
- Stalled weight loss (or weight gain)
- Impaired thoughts
- Cravings
- ...and more!

What about artificial sweeteners?

Artificial sweeteners are chemicals made to trick our brains into thinking something tastes sweet but doesn't give us the same calories as normal table sugar. This includes: splenda, equal, sweet 'n low, sweet one, sunett, aspartame, nutrasweet, cyclamate, acesulfame potassium, natratate, saccharine, sucralose, alitame, etc.

We do not believe these are safe to consumer and are nourishing. Artificial sweeteners can change the gut micro biome, may cause blood sugar dysregulation, increase risk of vascular events like stroke, neurologic dysfunction, and many other potential side effects.

What about natural sugars?

Natural sugars are those sweeteners that come from plants and/or herbs originally. These sugars include cane sugar, raw sugar, turbinado sugar, sugar cane, maize sugar, stevia, agave nectar, birch syrup, barley malt syrup, brown rice syrup, blackstrap molasses, cane juice, palm sugar, coconut sugar, honey, maple syrup, sorghum syrup, sugar beet syrup, licorice root, brown sugar, date paste, date syrup, carob molasses, nectar of any sort, dextrose, fructose, sucrose, maltose, malt, invert sugar, etc. Just because it is labeled as natural does not mean they are healthy to consume. On the Real Food Rescue we do not recommend consuming any sugar, even natural sugars so that you can reset your body and become more fat adapted.



What are *sugar alcohols*?

A type of alcohol molecule which originates from sugar. Used as sweetener and thickener in foods. They Includes methanol, ethylene glycol, glycerol, erythritol, threitol, arabitol, xylitol, ribitol, mannitol, sorbitol, galactitol, fucitol, iditol, inositol, volemitol, isomalt, maltitol, lactitol, maltotriitol, maltotetraitol and polyglycitol. Safe to eat? We do not think so. Sugar alcohols can increase blood sugar, may cause bloating, and GI distress when excessive amounts are consumed. There is no reason to use sugar alcohols in your diet, while they may be lower in calories they are disruptive to your health, digestive system and are not Real Food Rescue approved.

Can you have some sugar POST Real Food Rescue? It depends! There is a time and place for some added sweetness. If you have a special occasion we recommend using natural sugars. These include maple syrup, raw honey, stevia leaves or blackstrap molasses. While these natural sugars still have sugar and are not meant to be consumed regularly they are more natural and have some micro and trace nutrients that are beneficial to you including calcium, magnesium, manganese, potassium, copper, iron, etc. Just remember if you eat real food you will not need as much sweetness and things you did not think were sweet (like carrots) will start to become sweet, you do not need dessert every day and remember sugar LACKS nutrient density.

That's a (lettuce) wrap:

- Eat your carbohydrates in the form of vegetables (both starchy & non-starchy) and fruits.
- During The Real Food Rescue eliminate all added sugars including natural sweeteners, sugar substitutes, sugar alcohols and yes plain old table sugar.
- Choose carbohydrate amounts that fit your goals and your lifestyle.

