

HAPPY SPRING, SWEATCOMMUNITY!

And to the people that are new to our neighborhood, welcome to the 'hood!

Today is the beginning of something new:

A Sweat City Mini-Series!

Over the next month or 2, we'll be covering the 3 "macronutrients" that make up your diet. These are Carbohydrates, Proteins, and Fats. Having a better understanding of each of these is essential to constructing a healthy, balanced diet.

And if you're thinking, "Oh great, another dumb lecture on why I need to eat healthier" then I hope that chocolate bar you're eating goes straight to your hips. Just kidding, I know it's actually a sugar-free protein bar and it's going straight to your biceps.

Today's topic is about the controversy about carbohydrates. Are they good or bad for you? Why do many diets tell you to stay away from carbs even though you need them for energy? What the heck is a carb in the first place?

If you're serious about your health, it's imperative that you know what you're putting into your body and the effects it has on it. Keep reading!



THE CARBOHYDRATE CONTROVERSY

Carbs are highly controversial nowadays. Some dietary guidelines say we should get about half of our calories from carbs, while others claim that carbs cause obesity and type 2 diabetes. Who should we listen to and why?

There hasn't been a controversy this awful since Batman fought Superman. Apologies, Ben Affleck.

GOOD CARB, BAD CARB

Not all carbs are created equal. They vary greatly in their health effects. Some carbs are referred to as "simple" or "refined" carbs. Others are labeled as "complex" or "whole" carbs.

Simple or refined carbs have been processed and have had their natural fiber (healthy stuff) removed from them. Examples of these are sweetened drinks, juices, white bread, white rice, white pasta, chips, fries, and candy. Simple carbs will give you a quick spike in energy, but this is followed by an energy-crash after. This up and down rollercoaster of energy is why simple carbs are considered "bad carbs."

Complex or whole carbs are unprocessed and contain the fiber found naturally in food. Examples include vegetables, potatoes, most fruits, whole grains, brown rice, brown pasta, and legumes. Complex carbs are loaded with nutrients and give you more sustained energy.

THE LOW-CARB DIET

Ok here's where things get tricky. When people go on a weight-loss diet, carbs are often the first thing they are told to reduce. And because of this, people have begun thinking that all carbs are evil and are what caused weight gain in the first place. Not the case!

The reason people recommend low-carb diets is because the term "carb" includes those trashy simple carbs. Every dietician will agree that unhealthy, simple carbs must be avoided! But like we talked about, complex carbs are healthy and give you good energy.

Another reason why people cut carbs (rather than protein or fats) is because they aren't "essential" nutrients. Even though the body and brain need carbs for energy, they can function without them. And when it comes down to reducing calories, it's probably better to cut carbs (even good, complex ones) rather than protein.

THE TRICK TO CARB CUTTING

Here's the trick to lowering your calories and carbohydrate intake, while keeping your energy levels sustainable:

- Cut all simple or refined carbs! Sugar is evil!
- Continue to eat complex, whole carbs in moderation
- Veggies are lowest-calorie options for energy, eat more!
- Eat complex carbs early in the day (breakfast, lunch, before exercise) to fuel your body.
- **Avoid all carbs in the evening.** This is the key! You don't need the energy as much at night, so this is when you can cut your carbs and calories. Veggies are still fine anytime.

SUMMARY

There are good carbs (complex, whole) and bad carbs (simple, refined). Low-carb diets are popular because they keep you away from bad carbs. It's important not to do away with good carbs because you need them for energy. The best way to stay

energized and cut weight is to eat good carbs earlier in the day and then reduce them at night.

Next time we talk about the most important macronutrient, protein.

Thanks for stopping by and hope to see you take advantage of our [Sweat 4 Summer Special!](#)

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