

## Eat Well, Age Well: Smart Carbohydrate Choices

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### What are carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates are the body's main source of fuel. They give us energy to use or to be stored to use later. Most carbohydrate foods also have health-giving vitamins and minerals.

Carbohydrates can be found in three different food groups:

1. Starch/bread/grain group
2. Fruit group
3. Dairy group

Try to include **one serving** of a carbohydrate from **each of these groups** at each meal:

#### Starch/Bread/Grain Group:

1 slice bread, 1/3 cup cooked rice, 1/2 cup corn

#### Fruit Group:

1 small fresh fruit, 1/4 cup dried fruit [raisins, prunes, apricots], 1/2 cup 100% juice

#### Dairy Group:

1 cup lowfat milk, 2/3 cup fruit-flavored lowfat yogurt sweetened with non-nutritive sweetener



### Which vegetables count as a carbohydrate choice?

There are two main types of vegetables: **starchy** and **non-starchy**.

#### Starchy Vegetables include:

- Potatoes
- Corn
- Peas
- Sweet potato
- Winter squash
- Lima beans



The **starchy vegetables** are considered carbohydrate choices. Because they have more carbohydrates in them, they belong in the **starch/bread/grain** group. Starchy vegetables are still a good choice to include in your meal plan. Just like non-starchy vegetables, these vegetables provide the body with vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals. Pick bright colored starchy vegetables as your carbohydrate choice for the starch/bread/grain group!

#### Non-Starchy Vegetables include:

- Salad greens
- Spinach
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Tomatoes
- Cauliflower
- Cabbage
- Green beans
- Peppers
- Cucumbers



When picking which vegetable to eat, remember that **fresh** and **frozen** vegetables are your best choices. If using canned vegetables, pick the ones that say “low

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sodium” or “no salt added” on the label. If you cannot find canned vegetables with lower sodium content, drain the vegetables and rinse them with water. This will help to lower the sodium that is on the vegetables.

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

## What are added sugars?

Sugars and syrups that are added to food during processing or home preparation are added sugars.

### Examples of added sugars:

- Brown sugar
- Corn syrup
- Fructose
- High fructose corn syrup
- Malt syrup
- Sugar
- Honey

### Examples of foods that contain added sugars:

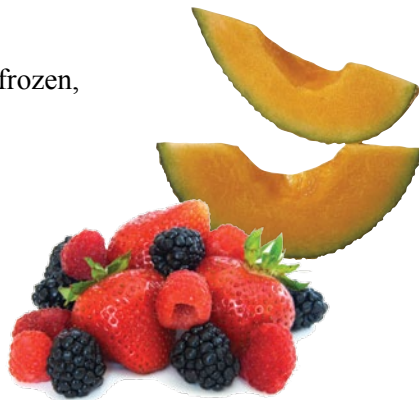
- Regular soft drinks
- Candies
- Cakes, cookies, pies
- Fruit drinks (Fruitades and fruit punch)
- Ice cream, sweetened yogurt and sweetened milk
- Other grains (cinnamon toast, sweet rolls and honey-nut waffles)

### Reduce the amount of added sugars by:

Eating more nutrient-dense foods (more nutrients, such as vitamin C, vitamin A and fiber) that have natural sugars, like:

**Whole fruit** (fresh, frozen, canned and dried):

- Cantaloupe
- Orange
- Apple
- Blueberries
- Pear
- Raspberries
- Pineapple
- Mango



Choose carbohydrates that are packed with nutrients, and those that are high in fiber such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans. Carbohydrates such as whole grains and beans are digested slowly and are used by the body over a steady period time.

Look below to see which carbohydrates you should choose. These carbohydrates should be included as part of a high-quality diet. Choosing healthy carbohydrates may provide the nutrients to prevent sickness, decrease recovery time from illness, and improve overall quality of life.

### Try these carbohydrate choices:

- 1 slice whole wheat bread
- 1 6-inch corn or whole wheat tortilla
- 1/2 cup “old fashioned” oatmeal
- 1/3 cup whole-wheat pasta
- 1/3 cup brown rice
- 1/3 cup cooked black beans or peas
- 3 cups popped popcorn



### Instead of these carbohydrate choices:

- 1 slice white bread
- 1 6-inch white flour tortilla
- 1/2 cup instant flavored oatmeal
- 1/3 cup of durum wheat (white) pasta
- 1/3 cup white rice
- 1/3 cup baked beans with molasses and bacon
- 3 cups potato chips

**Reviewer:** Kathy Hosig

#### Sources:

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