Carbohydrates (carbs) are found in healthy and unhealthy foods. They also come in different forms such as sugars, fibers, and starches.

Your digestive system breaks down carbs into sugar (glucose). As blood sugar levels rise, the pancreas makes insulin to absorb the sugar/glucose for storage or energy. When storage is full, insulin will transform the extra sugar/glucose into fat.

HEALTHY (COMPLEX) VS. UNHEALTHY (SIMPLE) CARBS

Vegetables | Fruits | Whole Grains | Beans | White Bread | White Pasta | White Rice | Sodas
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---

To calculate carbs, find the carbohydrates on your food labels. Use this formula to see how much carbs turn into sugar:

5 grams of carbs = 1 teaspoon of sugar

16 grams of carbs = 3.2 teaspoons of sugar

Harvard School of Public Health
CARBOHYDRATE = SUGAR

The American Heart Association recommends 55-60% of your calories should be carbohydrates. If eating 2,000 calories a day, 275 - 300 grams of carbohydrates are recommended. Remember, 5 grams of carbs = 1 teaspoon of sugar.

1 serving of traditional pasta sauce
Great Value

2 teaspoons of sugar

1 serving of bbq sauce
Sweet Baby Ray's

4 teaspoons of sugar

1 (60z.) yogurt
Yoplait Mixed Berry

5 teaspoons of sugar

1 can of soda
Coca-Cola

10 teaspoons of sugar
Diabetes

The balance between how much insulin is in your body and the carbohydrates you eat makes a difference in your blood glucose levels. Keeping track of what type of carbohydrate (good/bad) you consume, along with the amount, is key in managing diabetes.

**Uncontrolled diabetes causes health problems such as:**

- Blindness
- Kidney Failure
- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Loss of toes, feet or legs

---

**Blood Glucose Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mg/DL</th>
<th>Fasting</th>
<th>After eating</th>
<th>2-3 hours after eating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>80-100</td>
<td>170-200</td>
<td>120-140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired glucose</td>
<td>101-125</td>
<td>109-230</td>
<td>140-160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetic</td>
<td>126+</td>
<td>220-300</td>
<td>200+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**GOOD VS. BAD CARBS**

- Non-starchy vegetables
- Fruits
- Greens
- Soda
- White pasta
- White rice
- Sugary cereal

If you eat 2,000 calories a day, you should consume about **250 grams of complex (good) carbohydrates**.

A good starting place for **people with diabetes** is to have roughly **45-60 grams of carbs per meal and 15-30 grams for snacks**.