

TYPES OF CARBOHYDRATES

Three Main Types of Carbohydrates:

Starches (complex carbohydrates):

- Grains such as wheat, rice, barley, oats (two types of grains, whole and refined):
 - Whole grains – Includes the entire kernel – the bran, the germ, and the endosperm. Examples of food include whole wheat flour, brown rice, and oatmeal.
 - Refined grains – The bran and germ are removed by a process called milling. This also removes the fiber, many B vitamins, and iron. Most refined grains are enriched which means that the B vitamins and iron are added back, but the fiber is not added back.

Sugar:

- Naturally occurring sugars such as the ones in fruit and milk
- Added sugars such as sugar added to coffee or sweets.

Fiber (the indigestible part of plant foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and legumes):

- Soluble Fiber – Helps with heart health by lowering cholesterol levels and stabilizing blood glucose levels. (Examples: fruits, vegetables, whole grain pasta or breads, dried beans, legumes, and nuts)
- Insoluble fiber – Helps with digestion. (Examples: skin on fruits or potatoes, seeds (so try to eat your peels!))

Note: On a nutrition facts label, count **“Total Carbohydrates”** because all 3 above are combined to show the total amount of carbohydrates in a serving.

Sugar Alcohols:

Sugar Alcohols are a type of reduced-calorie sweetener found in sweets labeled "sugar-free" or "no sugar added." They have fewer calories than sugar and may have less of an effect on blood glucose; however, sometimes products that are sugar-free have a large amount of carbohydrates so always check the nutrition facts label for “total carbohydrates”.

- Examples of sugar alcohols:
Erythritol, Glycerol (also known as glycerin or glycerine),
Hydrogenated starch hydrolysates, isomalt, lactitol, maltitol, mannitol, sorbitol, xylitol

Note: They do not contain alcohol even though they are called sugar alcohols.

Net Carbs:

On a food label, total carbohydrates include all carbohydrates. However, since dietary fiber and sugar alcohols have less of an impact on blood glucose than sugar or starch, some people are interested in knowing the net carbs (the remainder after taking out sugar alcohols and fiber). Net carbs can be calculated using the following equation:

- Total Carbohydrates – Sugar Alcohols – Dietary Fiber = Net Carbs

Note: The term net carbs is not used by the FDA or American Diabetes Association.