

What's a carb?

Learning about nutrition and diabetes

What's a "good carb"? What's a "bad carb"? Should I follow a low carbohydrate diet? These are common questions from diabetics and non-diabetics alike. Our more sedentary lifestyles and increased consumption of highly processed foods has contributed to an epidemic of obesity and diabetes. When choosing a healthy diet, balance is key. Carbs are not the enemy. However, quantity and quality of carbohydrates is important.

Choosing carbs that are higher in fiber, or more "complex" carbohydrates, improves satiety and reduces spikes in sugar and insulin. Check food labels for fiber content. Try to consume at least 20 grams of fiber daily with plenty of water. Foods that are rich in both complex carbohydrates and protein, such as beans/legumes (examples: edamame, black beans, chickpeas, lentils) and whole grains (examples: quinoa, rye, oats) also tend to be lower on the "glycemic index". Research has shown that diabetics who follow a

lower glycemic index diet significantly improve their blood sugars. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes are better sources for carbohydrates than processed foods.

The "simple" carbohydrates, such as white bread, white pasta, white rice and white potatoes are rapidly absorbed and converted to sugar. Limit these carbohydrates to small portions. When a food label lists sugar, sucrose, fructose, corn syrup, white or wheat flour, it contains simple carbohydrates. If these ingredients are at the top of the list, they may contain mostly simple carbohydrates and little else and should be avoided.

Eating small meals regularly – every two to three hours if possible – reduces the risk for erratic blood sugars and may have the added benefit of boosting metabolism. Saturated fat should be less than seven percent of calories with minimal trans fat. Reduction of protein intake may be necessary for

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diabetics with kidney disease. Diabetics should always talk to their doctors prior to making major changes in diet to determine the necessity of adjusting either blood sugar testing or medication. A healthy diet should be combined with regular aerobic exercise with a goal of 150 minutes per week.

Office Hours

All Thunderbird Internal Medicine offices are open weekdays from 8 am to 5 pm. Extended hours are available at our 5620 West Thunderbird Road, suite C-1 and F-1 locations from 7 to 8 am weekdays. For urgent medical matters, the suite F-1 office has appointments available during some evenings as well as Saturdays from 8 am to 1 pm.

Welcome Michele Pelusio!

Patients at our 5620 West Thunderbird Road, suite F-1 office are encouraged to greet newcomer Michele Pelusio, NP. A graduate of the Nursing Science program at Grand Canyon University, Michele earned a Master of Science Degree in Nursing/Family Nurse Practitioner from the University of Phoenix. She is an experienced nurse practitioner with the ability to manage complex medical conditions.



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