

Smart Carbs, NOT Low Carbs!

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So what is the craze all about with the low carb and gluten free diets? You would have to have been born yesterday to not of heard about the Atkins Diet, South Beach or the Zone. The movement should be referred to as SMART carbs not low carbs.

A few people might be losing weight, but they may be losing energy, important nutrients, and control of their health. Diets in general focus only on the weight loss not on overall health and well being. Calories are only one approach and aspect to reducing body weight. Feeding your body the appropriate nutrients it needs is another. Our bodies need complex carbohydrates for energy production, B vitamins and antioxidants for combating the stress we put on our bodies, valuable vitamins and minerals for digestive enzyme production as well as fiber for balancing blood sugar and clearing toxins from the body. Feeding the body what it actually needs helps it to function properly such as, boosting metabolism, increasing energy production and strengthening the immune system.

It is true that North American's do consume too many processed and refined carbohydrates, so reducing the current consumption of simple sugars, most commercial breads and pastas and junk food could be a good idea, for many aspects of ones health, besides just losing weight. But... don't forget that vegetables, fruits, beans and lentils are carbohydrates too. Therefore there are plenty of ways to make smarter choices when it comes to carbohydrates than to simple cut them out.

Why not try alternative grains, like kamut, amaranth, quinoa, spelt, buckwheat or millet. These grains are mainly gluten free, are high in fiber and provide a variety of nutrients for the body to pool from. Try rethinking your plate portions where vegetables take up half or three quarters of the space. And do not be afraid to add some plant proteins, such as soy, beans and lentils. These are the best complex carbs of all because they provide plenty of protein too.

Tip: Energy for intense training can use up to 100% from Carbohydrates, 50% from Fats and 5-15% from protein