

Wellness Topic

What is a Carbohydrate, Protein, and Fat?

Where do I get my calories? What do I need to eat?

The average teen age girl needs 1800 to 2000 calories.

The average teen age boy needs 2200 to 2400 calories.

Carbohydrates

- Carbohydrates are the main source of energy that fuels our body. Main examples are sugars and starches found in fruit and some veggies, dairy foods and grain-based food like bread. Whole grain products are better, and they will boost your fiber intake.
 - Girls should consume 225 to 325 grams per day.
 - Boys should consume 300 to 400 grams per day.
- There are two types of carbohydrates
 - Simple carbohydrates
 - These are sugars found in fruits, candy cookies and soda.
 - They provide quick energy.
 - Complex carbohydrates
 - These are starches found in vegetables like corn and potatoes, as well as bread, cereal, pastas, rice and dry beans.
 - They provide sustained energy.

If a person takes in more carbohydrates than their body can use for energy or store as glycogen, the excess glucose is stored as adipose tissue (body fat).

Fats

- **Unsaturated Fats**, the “good fats”. Choose this fat as much as possible (fish, nuts, seed, avocados, olive oil).
 - Helps you absorb vital vitamins; therefore, you need them in your diet.
 - Supply twice the energy of a gram of carbohydrate or protein.
 - Helps regulate the hormone, testosterone, which is used to build body tissue.
 - Enhances the flavor and texture of foods.
 - Help satisfy hunger because they take longer to digest.

Saturated Fats are the “bad fats”. Too much of these can cause health risks.

- Eating too many fats can clog arteries and lead to heart disease.
- Can lead to certain types of cancer.
- If not used is stored as adipose tissue.
- Too much body fat can lead to unhealthy weight gain and obesity.
- Excess can lead to Type 2 diabetes.
 - Girls should consume 55 to 75 grams per day of good fat.
 - Boys should consume 75 to 100 grams per day of good fat.

Protein

Is a component of bones, connective tissue, skin, blood and vital organs. Your body needs protein to grow, repair, and maintain itself, help fight diseases and supply energy.

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- All foods made from meat, poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy product, nuts, and seeds are considered part of the protein food group.
- The amount of food from the protein food group you need to eat depends on your age, gender, and level of physical activity. Most Americans eat enough food from this group, but need to make leaner and more varied selections of these foods.
 - Girls should consume around 46 grams per day.
 - Boys should consume around 52 grams per day.

Sugar

Sugars are carbohydrates that provide the body with energy. They occur naturally in fruits. You should try to consume only natural sugars.

- No more than 5 to 8 teaspoons per day.
- 21 to 24 grams per day for girl.
- 25 to 30 grams per day for boy.

Salt

Sodium is needed for good health, however, too much can cause adverse health effects. Our diets generally contain far more sodium than we need. If you are eating processed foods always check the label to see how much sodium it contains.

- Your recommended daily intake of sodium is approximately 1500 milligrams per day.

*******Active Teens can consume more in each area depending on their activity level.**

*******You can go to www.myplate.gov to calculate your specific caloric intake.**