

The Low-Carb Craze.

Not long ago, it seemed like everyone was counting carbs. New products quickly appeared on store shelves, including low-carb versions of bread, milk and even ice cream.

But while fad diets come and go, there is important information to take away from the low-carb craze. Limiting certain types of carbs may improve your overall health and well-being.

Carbs, or carbohydrates, are made up of glucose (sugar) molecules. During digestion, your body breaks down carbohydrates into sugar so it can enter the blood stream. The glycemic index (GI) is a number that represents how quickly this process occurs. The higher the GI, the faster the body turns food into sugar.

Carbohydrates with a high GI, such as those from sugary beverages, candy or highly processed foods like white bread or sweet rolls, break down quickly. This causes a spike in blood sugar levels, which is believed to cause food cravings and overeating.

On the other hand, a diet rich in foods with a low GI helps keep blood sugar levels even. Low GI carbohydrates include most vegetables and whole grains, such as whole-wheat bread, rye bread, oatmeal and brown rice. These foods, along with proteins and fats, leave you feeling satisfied longer.

Carbohydrates provide many of the nutrients your body needs. Whole grains, whole-wheat pasta, brown rice and oatmeal provide many vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients. Non-starchy vegetables and low-sugar fruits are also high in fiber, vitamins and minerals.

Think of food as fuel for your body, and choose your carbohydrates wisely!

If you would like more information on a variety of exercise tips, how to make healthier food choices, or to enroll in one of our Health Education classes, call **(702) 877-5356**.

Good health takes a good plan.SM

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