



## Why I love carbs and you should too

I LOVE working as a Sports Dietitian. I have the opportunity to assist others with developing a positive relationship with food. To associate food with strength and power and vitality, not guilt and shame and regret – how awesome is that?!

Many of my clients are scared of carbs, I have Italian clients afraid to eat pasta and Indian clients worried about rice with their favourite curry. How does this happen! When did we start thinking carbs are toxic? Are fattening? Can't be eaten after 4pm? Rubbish. It's all about balance people.

Everyone needs carbs,  
just different amounts.

Some people function best on 2-3g carbohydrate/kg of ideal weight every day, others need 5-6g/kg. Think about YOUR energy levels, if you're tired all the time, often sick, find it hard to concentrate OR often feel quite full and bloated – then you might not have the balance right.

Carbs provide fuel for our muscles to give us energy to keep up with work demands, to enjoy our daily jog and to run after our kids (and have fun doing it!). They provide fuel for our brain so we can concentrate, make rational decisions and outwit our kids with their constant negotiating and compromising.

Lastly they also strengthen our immune system so we are less susceptible to bacteria and viruses, meaning colds are less severe and shorter in duration, helping to fight off whatever the kids bring home from school.

## What's not to love?!

So if you're a bit carb phobic here are some ways to embrace carbs. Think of carbs as high nutrient vs low nutrient – there is the same amount of sugar in yoghurt as in a killer python – BUT we also get 10% of our daily protein and 25% of our daily calcium from yoghurt, necessary goodness to strengthen our body. It's also low GI, meaning the sugar is released slower and is longer lasting. Same goes for grains, when they have a higher fibre content (>3g/serve), they fill us up for longer, helping with appetite management and the fibre also feeds our gut to keep us regular. Finally keep it balanced, ½ cup chickpeas or cooked brown rice or quinoa mixed through a salad with ½ cup chicken or tuna for lunch is adequate, there is no need to pile your plate with carbs.

Learn to love carbs. By all means cut back on the softdrink and the highly processed low nutrient foods, but take the time to balance your plate with high nutrient carbs at each main meal. Boost your energy, sharpen your focus and strengthen your immunity.

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