



# Not All Carbs are Created Equal

Although carbohydrates are an essential part of a healthy diet, in recent years they have been perceived by many as being “unhealthy.” This belief was highlighted in a recent survey showing that three in 10 Americans said they have recently changed their opinion about the healthfulness of carbohydrates, with 65 percent now believing they are less healthful.<sup>1</sup> A better understanding of the role carbohydrates play in the body, the amount required, and the different types and quality may help alleviate misconceptions and concerns about their consumption.

## Quality Counts

Carbohydrates are the body's primary source of energy, fueling most organs and tissues in the body, including our brain and muscles.<sup>2</sup> They are found mostly in grains, fruits, vegetables and dairy foods, and are present in two primary forms: starch and sugar. No matter the source, all carbohydrates are broken down into glucose in the body to provide energy. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that carbohydrates make up the largest portion of our daily calories (45-65 percent). Based upon a 2000-calorie diet, this translates to approximately 225-325g of carbohydrates a day.<sup>3</sup>

Although the Dietary Guidelines make a recommendation for total carbohydrate intake, it is important to remember that not all carbohydrates are created equal. Carbohydrate-rich foods can differ in the amounts and types of nutrients they provide, including whole grains, fiber, vitamins and minerals. Carbohydrates can also differ in the rate at which they release glucose in our bodies, resulting in different physiological implications.<sup>4</sup> For example, slowly digestible starch (a slow-release carb) takes longer for our body to break down, resulting in a steady release of energy. Other carbohydrates can break down quickly, resulting in a rapid release of energy. It is therefore important to consider the quality of carbohydrates--their nutrient content and/or the rate at which they release energy--when choosing foods to meet the recommended intake.

## Slow-Release Carbs for Steady Energy

Slowly digestible starch (a slow-release carb) is naturally found in many grains, legumes, roots, and tubers when they are in their uncooked form. The problem is that when slow-release carbs are exposed to

uncontrolled heat, pressure, and moisture, as can occur during cooking, they can be converted to fast-release carbs. Slow-release carbs can be preserved by controlling these variables.

When looking for foods with slow-release carbs, look for products with "slowly digestible starch" or "slow-release carbs" on the label. For example, backed by a decade of research, Crunchy belVita

**Slow-release carbs are a quality carb that take longer for the body to break down, resulting in a steady release of energy.**

Breakfast Biscuits were formulated to maintain a naturally high level of slow-release carbs, through carefully selected grains and a unique baking process, providing 4 hours of nutritious steady energy. In addition, they contain 18-20g of whole grains (per 50g serving), are a good source of fiber\* with 3-4g per serving, and a good source of B-vitamins and iron. All of this makes belVita a quality carbohydrate choice.

Ready to give these quality slow-release carbs a test run? Try pairing Crunchy belVita Breakfast Biscuits with a low-fat yogurt and fresh fruit for a balanced breakfast that will provide nutritious steady energy.

For more information on the science of slow-release carbs, visit [www.slowreleasecarbs.com](http://www.slowreleasecarbs.com).

<sup>1</sup> IFIC Food and Health Survey, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/carbohydrates.html>

<sup>3</sup> Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Englyst K, Vinoy S, Englyst HN, Lang V. Glycaemic index of cereal products explained by their content of rapidly and slowly available glucose. *Br J Nutr.* 2003;89:329-40.

\*Contains 8g fat per serving