



Carbohydrates are the main source of fuel for muscles and organs.

CARBOHYDRATE FACTS

Carbohydrates = Energy

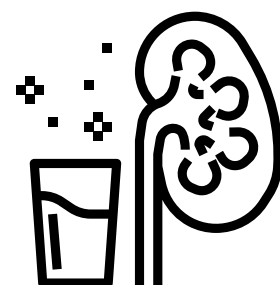
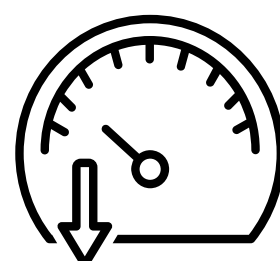
Tennis players must have enough muscle energy levels to allow them to last 2-3 hours on the court. If players adopt a low carbohydrate diet, they quickly increase their chances of fatigue and dehydration which negatively affect performance.



- Eating adequate carbohydrates will raise your metabolism and help you maintain optimum weight. Used to maintain blood sugar and quick energy stores (for brain and body). Stored in our body to be used as an energy source between meals and snacks. An important source of fiber, B vitamins, and iron. “Bulk” source, helps us to feel full and assists gastrointestinal function.

Negative Effects Of A Low Carb Diet

- Low in calories (< 1200 calories), far below the recommended minimums for tennis players. This can lead to low muscle energy levels and fatigue on the court.
- Can increase cravings for sugar and sweets.
- Over time, metabolism may be reduced.
- Low in fiber that your digestive function can be compromised.
- High protein diets (>10 oz./day) may result in high levels of cholesterol and saturated fat intake.
- Can accelerate the rate of calcium loss from bone and increase the risk of osteoporosis.
- Increased protein beyond the recommended dietary allowance can put the body at increased risk for kidney problems. For the tennis player, this leads to increased complications maintaining a normal hydration status and increased heat stress.
- Promotes high amounts of water weight loss, which leads to increased risk for severe dehydration while also causing light-headedness, fatigue, cold sensitivity, and decreased metabolic rates, thus negatively affecting performance.
- Reduced fruit and vegetable intake can lead to decreased immune function and ability to fight off illness and infection.



How Much Carbohydrate Do I Need?

A useful rule is to aim to eat 3g per 0.5kg (1lb) of body weight. For example, A 65kg (130lbs) person would need a minimum of 390 grams of carbohydrate per day.

Grain/Bread

- 2-3 choices at each meal 3 times per day (1 cup minimum portion)
- 1 choice at each snack (2 times a day)

Fruit

- Fruit: Minimum of 4 servings per day (or 2 cups)

Vegetables

- Vegetables: Minimum of 2 servings per day (or 1 cup minimum).

Dairy

- Dairy: Minimum of 3 servings per day (e.g., 1 cup milk/yogurt)

