

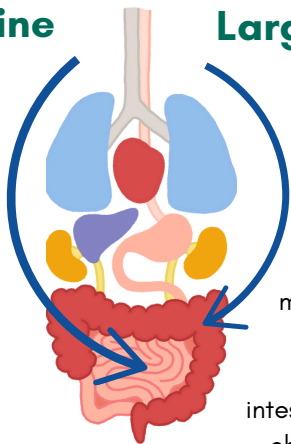


# Carbs 101: Building Energy for Menstrual & Menopause Health

Glucose is the preferred energy source for muscles during exercise. When the glucose is used, the body will use fat to provide energy. “Carbs” get a bad wrap – but there are no good or bad carbs. Your body needs the right balance of carbs to function.

## Small Intestine

Less starch complex carbs break down into simple carbs. To keep it simple, items are converted into glucose in the liver. The glucose is released into the bloodstream. The glucose will either be used immediately or stored in the liver and muscles, to be used at a later time.



## Large Intestine

Any complex carbohydrate that cannot be broken down in the small intestine. The “fibrous materials” move into the large intestine. While in the large intestine, making short-chain fatty acids and helps support the lining of the gut.

## What Do Carbs Support in the Body?

Energy Production

Blood Sugar Balance

Hormone Regulation

Gut Health

Mood and Mental Health

## What Carbs Do I Need?

### Menopause

Focus on fiber-rich carbs to help manage blood sugar and digestion, both of which can be more challenging during menopause.

### Menstrual

Carbs are beneficial throughout the entire cycle, but they can be particularly helpful during the luteal phase (days 15–28).

During this phase, progesterone increases, leading to heightened carb cravings and a greater need for energy.

Carbs help stabilize mood, reduce fatigue, and manage cravings, which are common in the luteal phase.

During the follicular phase (days 1–14), carbs support higher energy levels, especially as estrogen rises.

## How Do I Increase Safely?

**Add 10–15 grams each week**, allowing your body to adjust without digestive discomfort.

Start by adding one small serving of fruit, starchy vegetables, or whole grains each day.

Continue increasing by 10–15 grams each week until you reach your target.

## Calculate Your Carb Intake

**Carbs should generally make up 45–65% of your total daily calories.**

### Choose a % based on energy needs and goals:

*Lower end (45–50%):* For lower energy needs

*Higher end (55–65%):* For higher energy needs

**Then, multiply** daily calories by the %, **divide** by 4

### Standard Diet

**Whole Grains:** Brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat bread

**Starchy Vegetables:** Sweet potatoes, corn, peas, squash

**Legumes:** Beans, lentils, chickpeas

**Fruits:** Bananas, apples, berries

**Nuts and Seeds:** Chia seeds, flaxseeds

### Plant Based

**Whole Grains:** Quinoa, bulgur, farro, buckwheat, millet

**Legumes:** Lentils, chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans

**Starchy Vegetables:** Sweet potatoes, beets, parsnips

**Fruits:** Dates, bananas, mangos

**Nuts and Seeds:** Chia seeds, flaxseeds

### Disclaimer

This information serves educational purposes only and should not replace professional medical advice. Always consult a healthcare provider before adjusting your diet or starting new supplements, especially if you have pre-existing health conditions or are on medication.