

[IMAGE]

## When Carbohydrates Kill

By Editorial Staff

To eat carbs or not to eat carbs – in the modern diet age, that truly has been one of the major questions. What’s emerging from the quagmire of misinformation and quick-fix diet crazes is that not all carbs are created equal, and that moderation – as is the case with most things – is the healthy road to take. In other words, too many carbs – or too few – can be a problem.

Case in point: results from a study in *The Lancet Public Health* suggest people who pursue a high-carb or low-carb diet are more likely to die prematurely compared to people who eat carbs as part of a more balanced macronutrient diet. The greatest mortality risk was associated with consuming a diet containing less than 40 percent or more than 70 percent of daily calories from carbohydrates, while the lowest risk was associated with consuming a diet consisting of 50-55 percent of calories courtesy of carbs.

Why the health risk from low-carb or high-carb? According to the researchers, low-carb enthusiasts often replaced their carbs with protein and fat from animals (beef, chicken, cheese, etc.). In fact, the study found that low-carb-diet followers who replaced their carbs with protein / fat from plant sources (beans, nuts, vegetables, etc.) had a lower mortality risk compared to the low-carb group that replaced carbs with animal sources of protein and fat.

On the other hand, the high-carb group likely consumed the carbs we find increasingly unable to avoid these days – processed, nutrient-devoid crackers, cookies, chips, and countless other packaged foods. Eating a high-carb diet focused on whole grains, vegetables, fruit and the like (providing only natural sugar), while minimizing added / processed sugar carbs, would certainly be a better option.

The moral to the story: Moderation truly is the key when it comes to carbs. According to the study, average life expectancy after age 50 was 33 years for people with moderate carb intake, compared to 32 years for those on a high-carb diet and only 29 years for those with low-carb intake. And of course, both the type of carbohydrate consumed and the type of replacement (protein and fat) calories consumed made a difference, too. Talk to your doctor to learn more about the essentials of a well-rounded, longevity-promoting diet.

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