



# Training Guide

## Carbohydrates



## What are carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates are one of the three main nutrients in our diet alongside fat and protein, and are packed with energy. They come in three forms:

- i) Sugar, which occurs naturally, e.g. sugar cane, honey, milk (lactose) and fruit. You'll also find it added to food and drinks in its refined, purer forms like table sugar and syrups.
- ii) Starch is made up of lots of sugar molecules that only get broken down as we digest them, so they don't actually taste sweet. Bread, cereal, rice, pasta, potatoes and beans all contain starch.
- iii) Fibre. This is the kind of carbohydrate we can't digest. It's an essential part of keeping our digestive system healthy.

## What's their role?

Whether we eat them in the form of sugar or starch, our bodies break most carbohydrates down into glucose to give us energy. They also have a role in building and maintaining our cells, tissues and organs.

## Sources and relative amounts

They're key to a healthy, balanced diet. It's generally recommended that we get between 45%-60% of our energy from carbohydrates - we can get the rest from fats and proteins.

But it's not just how many carbs we eat that's important - it's what *kind*. It's better to eat more fibre-rich, starchy foods like fruit, vegetables and whole grains than sugary foods like sweets, chocolate and soft drinks.



## What is the issue?

Carbohydrates, and sugar in particular, have a bad reputation. That's because many sugary foods are generally lacking in any nutrients *other* than sugar. Foods high in sugars are in general high in calories. As our bodies store unused calories as fat, it's easy to put on weight if we eat too much or don't take enough exercise.

We're committed to helping people eat a healthy, balanced diet. But we need chefs' help to do that, ensuring that the food they serve contains the right balance of nutrients.

When it comes to carbohydrates, this means the right balance of starch, sugar and fibre. For example, our range of mashed potato products contain starch and fibre, and are low in sugar.