

4 Carbohydrates

Food for Energy

Time Taken: 
15 Minutes

Objectives

Participants will learn about Carbohydrate foods.

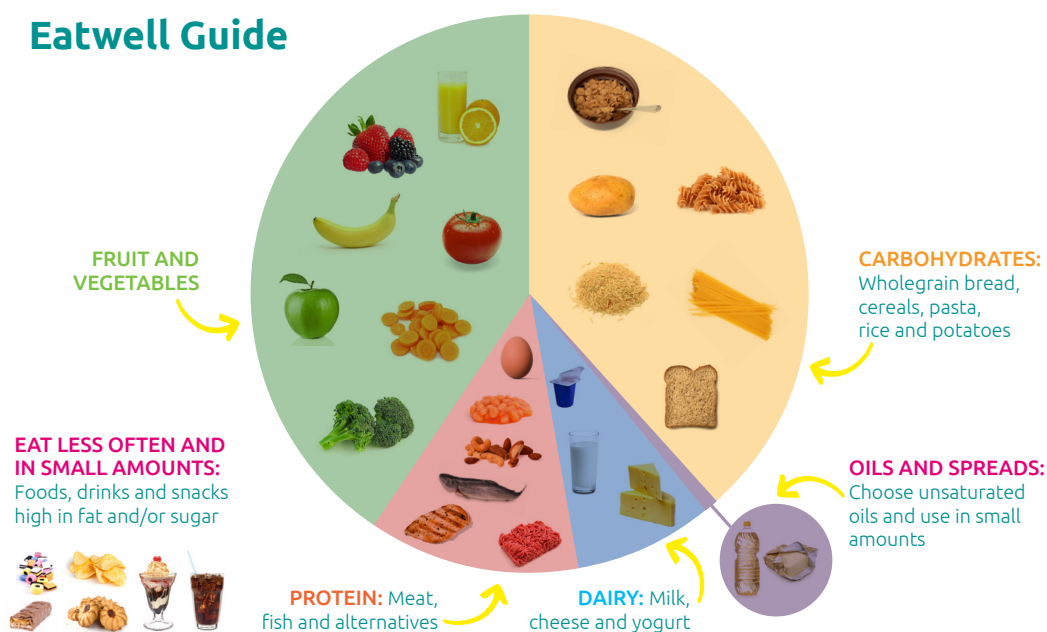


Step 1

What are Carbohydrates?

- Inform participants that today's topic will be carbohydrates.
- Use the food pyramid/Eatwell Guide poster to point out the carbohydrates section.
- Ask participants to name the different types of carbohydrate foods in the pictures.

Eatwell Guide



Food Pyramid



Step 2

Benefits

Why do we need carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates give us energy – just like when you put petrol in your car to give it the energy to drive!

What do we need energy for?

For example:

- Keeping us alive – our heart beating, lungs breathing, eyes blinking.
- Everyday activities – work/school, playing with friends etc.
- Training.
- Competitions.

Step 3**Which to Choose**

Brown or white? Show participants the picture of bread. Ask everyone to vote which side is healthier i.e. put your hands up if you think **Side A** is healthier (ensure you have indicated which is **Side A/Side B**).

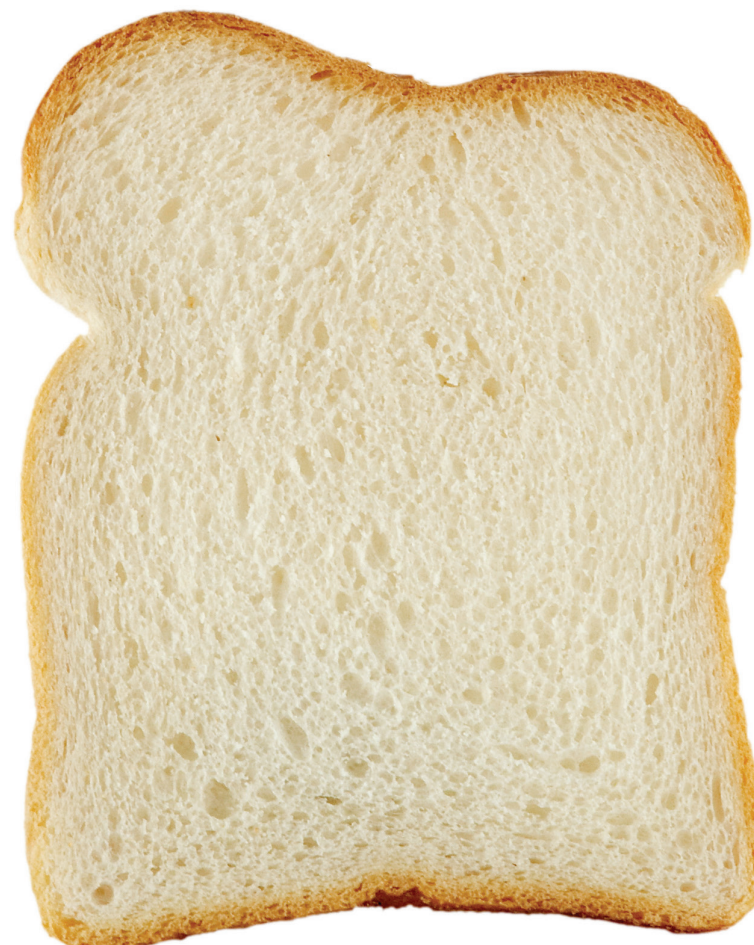
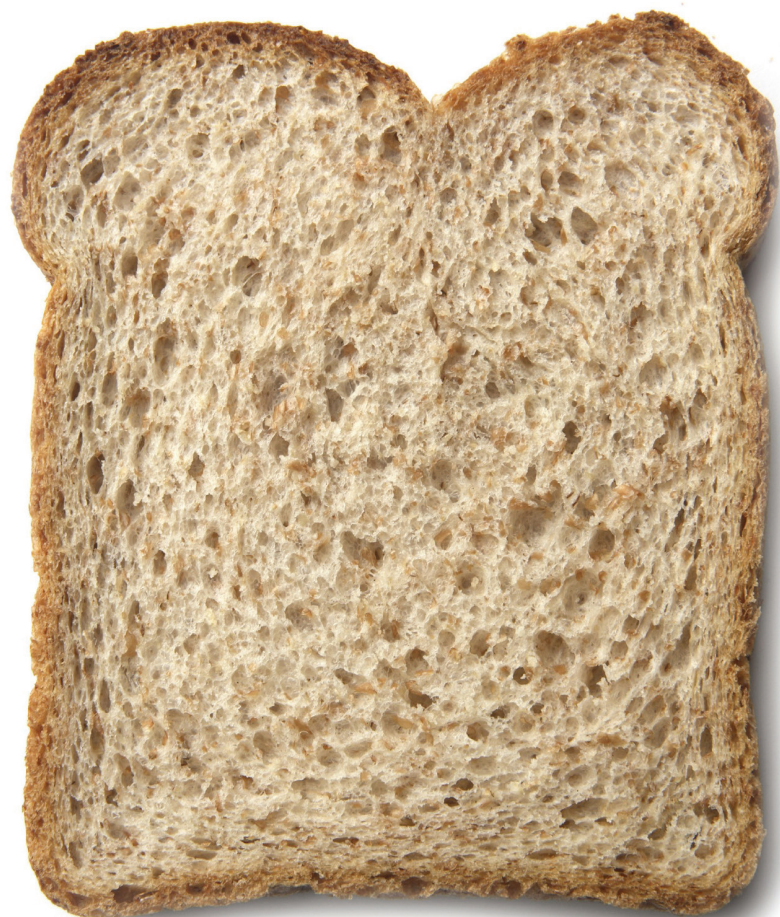
Explain that we should choose the wholemeal/wholegrain option when it comes to bread, rice and pasta because they have more fibre. Fibre is important as it helps food to move through our tummy and stops us from getting constipated.

It is important to drink enough fluid (e.g. water) to help the fibre to work in your tummy and gut.



Side A

Side B





Fibre Game (depending on group)

We need to drink plenty of fluid when we eat high fibre foods to help them move through our tummy.



Demonstrate: Have two bowls with a weetabix biscuit in each. Add half a cup of water to one and a full cup to the other. The weetabix with the most water is softer and the one with less is harder. This is what happens in your bowel if you don't drink enough fluid when you eat more fibre.



Also you can demonstrate how far food has to travel in your digestive system (10 metres). Have a piece of string 10 metres long rolled into a ball. Pass around the group unravelling it as you go – this helps to show how far food has to travel in your digestive system!

Step 4**Portion Size**

- Use the food pyramid/Eatwell Guide poster as a support.
- Ask participants can they remember how many portions of carbohydrate foods we need every day?

Answer: 3-5

Although if you are doing a lot of exercise/physical activity you may need more portions daily.

What is a portion?

- 1 slice of bread.
- 1 small bowl of cereal (40g).
- 1 medium sized potato.
- 25g/1oz of uncooked rice/pasta.
- 3 dessert spoons of cooked rice/pasta.





It is a good idea to bring examples of the foods e.g. a slice of bread, cereal, pasta, potatoes and rice. You can buy inexpensive supermarket own brand products or just bring some from home. Bring a small cereal bowl and a large cereal bowl and compare how many portions you can get in the large one. Weigh out 40g of cereal and show athletes how much it really is!



Also bring a cereal bowl and dessert spoon so athletes can practice measuring out portions.



Explain to participants why a portion of uncooked food is smaller than cooked, e.g. pasta or rice, because when they are cooked they take on water and get bigger.

Step 5

What to Avoid

Sometimes carbohydrate foods can become less healthy depending on what we add to them. For example, chips are made from potatoes but have a lot of fat added, boiled or baked potatoes are a healthier choice. Ask athletes:

What could you have instead of those foods which would be healthier?

- Switching from fried chips to oven chips.
- Creamy pasta sauces are high in fat. Tomato based sauces are healthier.
- Be careful about how much butter or spread you put on your bread, you only need a small amount .
- Switching from a sugary breakfast cereal to an unsweetened wholegrain cereal.

Step 6

Task Time

- Get each athlete to think of the different carbohydrate foods that they eat every day.
- Ask everyone to think of a healthy change that they can make to their carbohydrate foods e.g. switch from eating white bread to wholegrain or choose porridge for breakfast instead of a sugary cereal.
- Ask everyone to try and make that change every day for the next week.

