

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

A.E. HAAS, M.D.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

Carbohydrates

The major source of fuel energy in the average diet is from carbohydrates. They supply about one half of all calories. Starches and sugar containing foods are the major sources. However, proteins and fats can be converted into carbohydrates as needed. Carbohydrates can be broken down and reassembled back into proteins and fats. The storage form is glycogen. The liver and your muscles are the major areas where this storage process takes place.

In general all left over carbohydrates and proteins are stored by the body in the form of fat. They must be converted into fat before storage whereas fat requires minimal conversion to be stored. Your body never wastes food. It absorbs just about everything and either burns it to give you energy or stores it.

Carbohydrates come in three major forms. The monosaccharides are the simplest types and are frequently referred to as simple sugars. They cannot be further broken down into smaller units. The common glucose is an example.

When simple sugars are made into short chains they are called oligosaccharides. Maltose is an example from malt beverages as beer. Lactose is from milk and sucrose is from cane sugar as in table sweeteners.

Polysaccharides are long chains. They are found in many animal sources in the form of glycogen, and in food starches and plant cellulose.

I do not know of any "essential" carbohydrates that your body cannot make. You may not actually have to eat carbohydrates by this reasoning as your body can make them from fats and proteins. However, since both plant and animal food sources contain carbohydrates you cannot avoid them in your diet.

There is a toxicity associated with consuming too many carbohydrates. It is called obesity. Any calories not burned up in daily use are converted to fat and stored. The human body has an unlimited capacity to store fat. Do not think that carbohydrates cause obesity however. The fault is with excess calorie intake. If you eat nothing but proteins in excess you will still convert the unused amino acids into fat and become obese. Obviously excess fats get stored as fat.

Once again I will mention that the best of health is usually obtained with a balanced diet of varied sources in appropriate amounts. Throw in a little exercise and you will be better off than most people.

**The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.
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Just call us directly. No referral needed unless required by your insurance company

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