

# What Are the Macronutrients

Macronutrients are the building blocks of the food we eat. The three macronutrients that make up most of our food are: Carbohydrates, Proteins, and Fats. Having a balance of macronutrients in your diet helps contribute to whole body health. Keep each group in mind as you plan your meals.

## **Carbohydrates: The Energy Maker (4 calories/gram)**

The following foods contain carbohydrates:

- Starches/grains
- Fruit
- Milk/dairy
- Starchy vegetables
- Legumes (such as beans, lentils and peas)
- Sugar
- Smaller amounts in non-starchy vegetables

When choosing carbohydrates for your meals, remember to choose those that are:

- Low in added fat and sugar
- High in fiber, vitamins and minerals, and/or protein

## **Protein: The Muscle, Cell and Organ Maker (4 calories/gram)**

The following foods contain protein:

- Meat
- Poultry/eggs
- Fish
- Milk/dairy
- Legumes (such as beans, lentils and peas)
- Nuts/seeds
- Soy foods (such as tofu, edamame, soy milk, and tempeh)
- Smaller amounts found in grains and vegetables

When choosing proteins for your meals, remember to choose those that are:

- Low in saturated fat
- Lean or plant based
- Minimally processed



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## **Fat: The Hormone and Vitamin Maker (9 calories/gram)**

The following foods contain fat:

- Butter/margarine
- Oils
- Nuts/seeds
- Avocado
- Meat, poultry, fish, and eggs
- Some milk/dairy

When choosing fats for your meals, remember to choose those that are:

- Not trans fats. Choose minimally-processed foods without hydrogenated oils.
- Low in saturated fats. Saturated fats are found primarily in high-fat meat and dairy products, as well as coconut and palm oil.
- High in unsaturated fats. Unsaturated fats are found in plant-based foods, such as nuts, seeds, vegetable oils, and avocados. They are also found in fish like salmon.

