

Understanding Carbohydrates

Active bodies thrive on nutrient-dense CARBOHYDRATES in order to support our physical activities. Fruit and vegetables in season (organic whenever possible) and starchy root veggies and tubers like various potatoes, plantains, rutabaga, parsnips, and winter squashes provide those nutritious carbohydrates. The evidence of their power-packed punch is in their **colors** – bright reds, oranges and greens, deep blues and purples, and even the less flashy whites and browns. Our goal is to incorporate as many of these colors and foods into our children's diets, thus drawing all of us that much closer to robust health and comprehensive nutrition.

There are other groups of foods included in the carbohydrate category. These are the breads, grains, cereals, pastas, and all of their variations. They are indeed very dense sources of carbohydrates, but they are often **highly processed**, sprayed with **pesticides and other harmful chemicals**, and **offer very little in terms of nutrition**. In fact, there is nothing in grains specifically that we cannot get from other more bio-available sources. Unless someone in your home has a gluten sensitivity, there might not be reason to eliminate these foods entirely, but I believe it's in our best interest to use them sparingly, because breads and grains take the place of more nutritious foods on our plates.

Refer to your colorful foods chart for great ideas. And as you make this shift to fewer grains and more produce, be sure to incorporate enough protein and fat to support your children's caloric needs. When you cut back on one huge group of foods (breads and grains), you've got to replace it with *something*. Don't let them go hungry or feel jittery due to poorly regulated blood sugar. More to follow on this.

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