

# Health Concepts

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## Eating healthy is not about calculating calories.

### PREFACE

Like two sides of a coin, any diet preference has its benefits and side effects. Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health. This means eating a wide variety of foods in the right proportions and consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.

To have a healthy, balanced diet, you should eat at least five servings of a variety of fruits and vegetables every day. Starchy foods should make up just over a third of everything you eat. This means your meals should be based on these foods. Choose wholegrain or wholemeal varieties of starchy foods, such as brown rice, wholewheat pasta, and brown bread. They contain more fiber and, usually, more vitamins and minerals than white varieties.

Milk and dairy foods, such as cheese and yogurt, are good sources of protein. They also contain calcium, which helps keep your bones healthy.

Good sources of protein like beans, pulses, fish, eggs, and meat are essential for the body to grow and repair itself.

Some fat in the diet is essential. Remember that all types of fat are high in energy and should be eaten in small amounts.

Many people are confused about carbohydrates, but keep in mind that it's more important to eat carbohydrates from healthy foods than to follow a strict diet limiting or counting the number of grams of carbohydrates consumed.

Eat for health.

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### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Bhankatiya (Hindi)  
Sundakkai (Tamil)  
Usthikaya (Telugu)



### TURKEY BERRY

Turkey berry/[Sundakkai](#) is a small green pea-shaped fruit usually treated as a vegetable and is an underrated ingredient. The botanical name for the turkey berry is [Solanum Torvum](#). Turkey berry is a popular food and herbal remedy used in a variety of ancient folk medicine practices. Even though it is smaller in size, turkey berries are good sources of vitamins A and C, as well as minerals, such as iron, calcium sodium, and potassium. They are low in fats and carbs. Fresh Sundakkai is bitter in taste and drying helps to reduce bitterness. Also, breaking all the berries and soaking them in the water before cooking helps to reduce the bitterness of berries.

- [Prevent and treat anemia](#) - Turkey berry is a particularly rich source of plant-based iron.
- [Regulates blood pressure](#) - may have the potential to reduce blood pressure by relaxing the blood vessels.
- [Potent antimicrobial properties](#) - has properties that may promote healthy immune function in multiple ways.
- [Helps in metabolic diseases](#) - Turkey berries are rich in bioactive polyphenols, that help lower blood sugar levels in those predisposed to diabetes. These polyphenols reduce oxidative stress, cell damage, and regulate metabolism.
- [Indigestion and diarrhea](#) - the ingredients of turkey berries calm an empty stomach and relieve acidity.
- [Prevention from cancer](#) - has antibacterial and anti-fungal properties that can stop excessive cell growth thus making it significant for cancer prevention.
- [Helps in Gout](#) - These berries help to flush out uric acid thus helping to reduce pain, redness, and symptoms of gout.

**NOTE:** Turkey berry is generally safe. Have them in moderation, overeating leads to nausea and dizziness.

### MEDICAL UPDATE

Dementia is a collective name for brain syndromes that affect memory, thinking, behavior, and emotion and is the leading cause of disability and dependency among the elderly. Each person experiences dementia in their own way. The warning signs of dementia are:

- Memory loss.
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks.
- Problems with language.
- Disorientation to time and place.
- Poor or decreased judgement.
- Problems keeping track of things.
- Misplacing things.
- Changes in mood and behavior.
- Challenges in understanding visual and spatial information.
- Withdrawal from work or social activities.

### PREVENTIVE PEARLS

#### Prevent dengue by avoiding mosquito bites

[Dengue fever](#) is a tropical-borne disease characterized by mosquito bites and the dengue virus.

- Reduce mosquito habitat.
- Use mosquito repellents.
- Wear protective clothing - long-sleeved clothes and full pants with socks.
- Sleep under a mosquito net.
- Do not let water stagnate anywhere.
- Keep your house well-ventilated and well-lit.
- Time your outings.

"Came from a plant, eat it; was made in a plant, don't."

-- Michael Pollan.

## Are all carbs bad for you?

Carbohydrates (also called carbs) provide the body with glucose, which is converted to energy used to support bodily functions and physical activity. Foods high in carbohydrates are an important part of a healthy diet.

**Carbohydrates: quality matters, not quantity.**

What's most important is the type of carbohydrate you choose to eat because some sources are healthier than others. The amount of carbohydrate in the diet-high or low-is less important than the type of carbohydrate in the diet.

The Dietary Guidelines recommend that carbohydrates make up 45% to 65% of total daily calories.

There are three main types of carbohydrates: sugar, starch, and fiber. Of the three, sugar is the simplest form of carb, while starch and fiber are complex carbs.

### Benefits of Carbohydrates

- Providing energy
- Protecting against disease
- Controlling weight

Carbohydrates are the body's main fuel source. During digestion, sugars and starches are broken down into simple sugars. They're then absorbed into the bloodstream, where they're known as blood sugar (blood glucose). Glucose is used by the body for energy. Glucose fuels your activities. Extra glucose is stored in the liver, muscles, and other cells for later use and converted to fat.

Fiber is essential for optimal digestive health. Evidence shows that eating plenty of fruit, vegetables, and whole grains can help you control your weight.

Essentially, carbs are either simple or complex, depending on their chemical makeup. Simple carbs are composed of easy-to-digest sugars, while complex sugars take longer to break down and typically have more important nutrients, including fiber and B vitamins.

### What makes carbs good or bad?

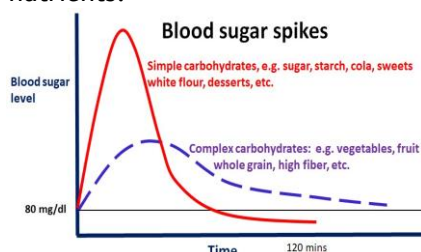
Refined and processed carbs are considered **bad**, as they are absorbed quickly by the digestive system and cause blood sugar level spikes, which in turn force the body to store the excessive sugar as fat.

Carbs full of unrefined fiber are considered **good**, as they are absorbed gradually into the system without causing spikes in blood sugar levels.

**The general rule of thumb is that complex carbohydrates are healthier.**

Complex carbohydrates are found in minimally processed or unprocessed whole foods and contain fiber, vitamins, minerals, and protective antioxidants.

Simple carbohydrates are found naturally in fruit, vegetables, and dairy, as well as in many processed foods. Processing increases shelf life but removes healthy fiber and nutrients.



### What is the Glycemic index?

The glycemic index (GI) is a measure of how quickly food can make your blood sugar (glucose) rise. Only foods that contain carbohydrates have a GI.

Foods are classified as low (0-55), medium (56-69), or high glycemic foods (70 or above). The lower the GI value, the less it may affect the blood sugar levels, hence better.

Following a low glycemic diet involves swapping out foods that have a high GI with low GI alternatives. A low glycemic diet may help manage blood sugar levels, reduce your cholesterol, and boost short-term weight loss. The principles of low-glycemic-index eating are likely to be beneficial for people with diabetes. But reaching and staying at a healthy weight is more important for your blood sugar and your overall health.

### Choose your carbs wisely

- Focus on eating fiber-rich fruits and vegetables.
- Choose whole grains.
- Stick to low-fat dairy products
- Eat more beans, peas and lentils.
- Limit added sugars.
- Choose whole fruit instead of juice.
- Pair carbs with protein or fat.
- Get food-label savvy.

Because carbs are fuel for your body, a lack of healthy carbs can have negative effects like lack of concentration, fatigue, muscle cramps, headaches & constipation.

### END NOTE

Carbs are not bad for you. Carbohydrates – both simple and complex ones – are part of a healthy diet. Just be sensible about the carbs you choose.

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