



Understanding Macros & Calories

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What are Macros?

Macronutrients are referred as macros and make up the caloric content of food. Understanding macros is key for the ketogenic diet especially when you are just starting out.

They are typically divided into 3 categories

- Carbohydrates
- Proteins
- Fats

CARBOHYDRATES AKA Carbs

Carbs are made of sugars and starches and not necessary for survival. Most of the carbs in the keto diet will come from your vegetables and lower glycemic fruit. The typical standard American diet eats lots of carbs (cookies, crackers, pasta, bread, corn syrup, sugar, honey, soda). E.g. 12 ounce Pepsi has 0g Fat, 41g Carbs, 41g Sugar

In the keto world you will often hear about “Net Carbs”, which is basically the total carbs minus the fiber which will result in net carbs. For example:

1 cup half strawberries (152 g)

Carbs = 12.0 g

Fiber = 3.0 g

Net carbs = 9.0 g

Source: www.nutritiondata.com

Carbohydrates provide 4 calories per gram therefore 1 cup of sliced strawberries would be 12 g X 4 cal= 48 calories from carbohydrates.

PROTEIN

Protein is essential for the body and important for tissue repair, muscle growth, hormone function, immune function and even enzymes. It is especially important in the ketogenic diet

in the absence or when minimizing carbs. Protein plays an important role in the body and building blocks of the body. Protein is broken down into amino acids.

There are 9 essential amino acids that cannot be made by the body, therefore must come from the food you eat:

- Histidine
- Isoleucine
- Leucine
- Lysine
- Methionine
- Phenylalanine
- Threonine
- Tryptophan
- Valine

A protein deficiency can result in malnutrition and contribute to many health conditions. Protein is important in a ketogenic diet and is important in preserving lean muscle mass. The amount of protein on a ketogenic diet depends on whether you want to gain lean muscle or maintain lean muscle. You definitely don't want to lose lean muscle mass.

Most of your protein will come from animal products like beef, chicken, organ meats, eggs, fish and even some plants to a smaller degree. Protein provides 4 calories per gram therefore 1 scoop of protein powder that contains 30 g of protein would be $30 \text{ g} \times 4 \text{ cal} = 120 \text{ calories}$ from protein.

FATS

Fat is essential in the diet and lots of it in the ketogenic diet, especially when you are transitioning into a fat burner from a sugar burner. Fat is necessary for energy, hormone production, cell growth, organ protection, and for absorption of certain vitamins. You've heard of fat soluble vitamins right? They are Vitamins A, D, E & K. Fats also help keep you full and add flavor to your meals.

You will want to add healthy fats to your diet like olive oil, coconut oil, grass fed butter, avocado, lard, nuts and seeds to help keep you satiated. Avoid unhealthy toxic fats like canola/rapeseed oil, cottonseed oil, soy bean oil partially hydrogenated fats/oils and vegetable shortening that contribute to inflammation and breakdown in the body.

Fats provide 9 calories per gram therefore 1 tablespoon of coconut oil would be $14\text{g} \times 9 \text{ cal} = 126$ calories from carbohydrates.

What is a calorie?

A calorie is a unit of energy. In terms of nutrition it is often referred to as the energy people get from food and drinks and the energy used in physical activity.

The number of calories in food tell us how much potential energy they contain. But don't be fooled not all calories are created equal. 100 calories from cookies is very different from 100 calories from broccoli in the form of the amount and the nutritional value for each one and how it affects hormones in the body which are instrumental in determining how much weight you will lose, gain, stay full, age, sleep and of course sex drive.

What is interesting we did not hear about calories until about 1819 from French chemist Nicholas Clement and it was popularized in 1918 by Lulu Hunt Peters in her book *"Diet & Health: with Key to the Calories"*.