

Do You Have Carbohydrate Intolerance (CI)?

Carbohydrate Intolerance (CI) is a common problem in many populations and the diseases associated with this condition are reaching epidemic proportions. Here is a brief outline of the various signs and stages associated with CI:

- Early stages of CI include elusive problems associated with blood-sugar handling, such as fatigue, intestinal bloating, cravings, and loss of concentration.
- Middle stages include more serious conditions including hypertension, elevations of LDL, lowering of HDL, elevated triglycerides, excess body fat, and often obesity.
- Long-term CI manifests itself as various diseases, including diabetes, cancer, and heart disease.
- Final stages include a condition referred to as Metabolic Syndrome. This stage includes disorders such as hyperinsulinemia, Type 2 Diabetes, Hypertension, Obesity, Polycystic ovary, Stroke, Breast Cancer, Coronary Heart Disease, High Blood Cholesterol and Triglycerides.

When these signs appear, your blood sugar levels are going up and down and not staying at a stable level. A stable blood sugar level reduces hunger and maintains satiety. CI is an individual one, affecting different people in different ways but, if you experience any of these signs regularly, consider making some changes to your nutrition program.

A good way of controlling and stabilizing your blood sugar level is by eating protein, carbohydrates, and fat at each meal. Protein helps balance the effect carbohydrates have on insulin and fat slows the absorption rate so you will encounter fewer peaks and valleys in your blood sugar. Everybody is different based on their genetics, but a good starting point is 25% protein, 55% carbohydrate, and 20% fat at each meal.

Try to eliminate the following items for 2 weeks to see if it makes a difference to any of the CI signs. If it does, keep away from them on an ongoing basis. After your body adjusts to not having them in your daily nutrition program, having them once every 4th day or so shouldn't make a difference.

- Breads, rolls, pasta, pancakes, cereal, muffins, chips, crackers and rice cakes
- Sweets and products that contain sugar such as ketchup, honey, etc. (read the labels to ensure there is no sugar)
- Fruit juice
- Processed meats that contain sugar
- Fat-free, Skim & 2% Milk, half and half
- Fat-free or Low-fat Yogurt & Ice Cream

- Energy Bars and Energy Drinks that contain fructose
- All soda, including diet

Foods you can eat include:

- Real food smoothies
- Steamed or raw vegetables (avoid white potatoes and corn) – organic ideally
- Fresh fruit - organic ideally
- Nuts and seeds – organic and free of any oils and salt
- Almond butter – organic ideally
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Balsamic Vinegar
- Whole fat mayonnaise
- Whole eggs
- Non-American yellow cheese – look for hard cheeses like Swiss, Provolone, etc.
- Meats (beef, turkey, chicken, lamb, etc.) – free range and sugar-free (read the label here!)
- Fresh Fish (cold water Atlantic) – salmon, sardines, albacore white tuna (nothing out of a can)
- Fresh Shellfish
- Tofu
- Mustard (as long as there isn't any sugar added)

Make sure you eat every 2-4 hours (even if you are not hungry). If you have been eating lots of sweets or other carbohydrates, you may experience cravings for sugar for the first few days. You may also experience headaches associated with low blood sugar.

You may find yourself falling off of the program, not because you intend to, but rather due to the realization that processed foods are everywhere. If you eat something that is not “approved” you need to start over and this is ok!

Stay consistent with both your food and aerobic training. Try to maintain a food intake log along with a detailed training log, specifically mental clarity, energy levels, and average and max heart rate with each workout. Over the next two weeks, you will capture a better snapshot of your nutrition and how it reflects on your health, wellness & performance.

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