

# The Free Fitness Tips Newsletter – February 2010

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Hello everyone. After what seems like an eternity the first **Free Fitness Tips Newsletter** of 2010 is finally here. I had a month's break from posting in January but now I'm back with some brand new content. This month I finished my series of posts on [dietary fats](#) and did a couple of posts on [macronutrients](#) in general. Below is a full list of this month's newsletter content:

- [Featured Article!](#)
- [Free Fitness Tips Blog Updates!](#)
- [Final Words!](#)

## 1) Featured Article

I chose this month's featured article because I feel it effectively summarises a number of my previous blog posts...

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## The 3 Macronutrients Explained: Carbohydrates, Fats & Protein



Over the last few months I have been covering the macronutrients in great detail. I have discussed what each of them do, the health benefits they provide, the possible drawbacks of consuming too much and some of the top food sources for each. Today I am going to bring all this information together and tell you everything you need to know about macronutrients.

### WHAT ARE THE MACRONUTRIENTS?

The macronutrients are the three main nutrients your body needs to survive. Your body needs each macronutrient in relatively large quantities to function properly. So what are the three macronutrients?:

- Carbohydrates (including the indigestible carbohydrate - fibre).
- Dietary Fat.
- Protein.

### CARBOHYDRATES

#### What Are Carbohydrates?



Carbohydrates are your body's preferred energy source. They are made from a combination of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. If they are not needed immediately carbohydrates can be stored by your body in the form of glycogen or body fat.

#### Simple Carbohydrates vs Complex

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## **Carbohydrates**

Carbohydrates can be either simple or complex depending on the number of sugars they contain. Simple carbohydrates contain one (monosaccharides) or two (disaccharides) sugars. Complex carbohydrates contain three or more sugars. Those that contain between three and ten sugars are referred to as oligosaccharides whilst those that contain more are referred to as polysaccharides.

### **Which Carbohydrates Are Best?**

When choosing carbohydrates there are a number of tips that I normally follow to ensure that I am getting those of the highest quality:

- *Choose Natural Carbohydrates.*
- *Go for High Fibre Carbohydrates.*
- *Go for [Vitamin Rich](#) Carbohydrates.*
- *Use the [Glycemic Index \(GI\)](#).*
- *Watch the Total Calories.*

### **Which Foods Are Good Carbohydrate Sources?**

There are many foods that match all the criteria discussed above. Below are seven of my favourites:

- *Apples.*
- *Bananas.*
- *Bell Peppers.*
- *Mushrooms.*
- *Onions.*
- *Oranges.*
- *Spinach.*

### **Do Carbohydrates Have Any Additional Benefits?**

Carbohydrates are not just a fantastic energy source for your body. They also supply your body with the following key nutrients (provided you choose the right ones):

- *Fibre (which aids proper digestion and supports a healthy bowel).*
- *Phytonutrients (which protect your body from bacteria and free radicals).*
- *[Vitamins](#) (which support your body with many vital functions).*

### **Do Carbohydrates Have Any Negative Side Effects?**

Whilst carbohydrates are your body's preferred energy source there are a number of negative side effects associated with consuming too much. These include:

- *Fluctuating Energy Levels.*
- *Permanent Organ Damage.*
- *Poor Appetite Control.*
- *[Type 2 Diabetes](#).*

- *Weight Gain.*

## **FIBRE**

### **What Is Fibre?**

Fibre (also known as cellulose) is an indigestible complex carbohydrate that comes from plant cell walls. It cannot be sourced from animal products. Fibre is a unique type of carbohydrate because it contains zero calories, zero vitamins and cannot be digested. Therefore, it does not provide your body with any energy or nutrients. Despite this fibre is still required in relatively large quantities for good health.



### **Insoluble Fibre vs Soluble Fibre**

There are two types of fibre; insoluble and soluble. Insoluble fibre absorbs water in your intestine to form a bulky mass which then helps clear waste materials from your digestive tract. Soluble fibre dissolves in the water in your intestine to form a thick gel which then holds food in your digestive tract for longer.

### **Which Foods Are Good Fibre Sources?**

Grains and wholemeal products are the richest sources of insoluble fibre. The list below contains some of the best insoluble fibre foods:

- *Bran Flakes (10g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Brown Rice (1.8g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Wholemeal Bread (6.3g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Wholemeal Spaghetti (8.4g of fibre per 100g).*

Fruits and vegetables are the richest sources of soluble fibre. The list below contains some of the best soluble fibre foods:

- *Apples (1.8g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Bananas (1.1g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Oranges (1.7g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Mushrooms (1.5g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Onions (1.4g of fibre per 100g).*
- *Peas (3.4g of fibre per 100g).*

### **What Are The Benefits Of Fibre?**

The main benefit of insoluble fibre is that it promotes more regular bowel movements. This leads to:

- *Reduced Bowel Disease.*
- *Reduced Constipation.*

The main benefit of soluble fibre is that it keeps food in your digestive tract for longer but it is also linked with preventing certain diseases. The full benefits include:

- *Better Absorption of [Vitamins](#) and Minerals.*
- *Better Blood Glucose Control.*
- *[Reduced Cancer Risk.](#)*
- *Reduced Heart Disease Risk.*

### **Does Fibre Have Any Negative Side Effects?**

Unfortunately, you can get too much of a good thing. Consuming excessive levels of fibre can lead to the following negative symptoms:

- *Constipation.*
- *Diarrhea.*
- *Reduced Absorption of Minerals.*
- *Removal of Good Cholesterol.*
- *Wind.*

### **DIETARY FAT**

#### **What Is Dietary Fat?**



Dietary fat does not have one main function but is still needed by your body in relatively large quantities. It is constructed from a combination of carbon and hydrogen atoms. Some of its functions include protecting you from disease, supporting your [immune system](#) and supporting your vital organs.

#### **How Many Dietary Fats Are There?**

There are four main types of dietary fat which all have different types of chemical bond:

- 1) [Saturated Fats](#)**:- Fats where all the carbon atoms are bonded to hydrogen atoms.
- 2) [Monounsaturated Fats](#)**:- Fats where the carbon atoms are bonded to hydrogen atoms at all but one point.
- 3) [Polyunsaturated Fats](#)**:- Fats where the carbon atoms are not bonded to hydrogen atoms at two or more point.
- 4) [Trans Fats](#)**:- Unsaturated fats that have a carbon atom added to them. This can happen naturally but usually happens through an artificial, man made process called hydrogenation.

## **Which Dietary Fats Are Best?**

Saturated fats, monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats all have proven health benefits so should be included as part of your diet. However, trans fats (with the exception of naturally occurring ones) have no reported health benefits and can actually be damaging to your health. Therefore, trans fats should be avoided where possible.

## **Which Foods Are Good Dietary Fat Sources?**

When it comes to dietary fats natural, unprocessed sources are the best foods. Below are six of my top dietary fat food choices:

- *Almonds.*
- *Avocado.*
- *Beef.*
- *Coconut.*
- *Eggs.*
- *Salmon.*

## **What Are The Benefits Of Dietary Fat?**

As I mentioned above dietary fat is not responsible for just one thing in your body. It actually does all the below:

- *Keeps your Skin Healthy.*
- *Helps you absorb Omega 3 Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs).*
- *Helps you Burn Body Fat.*
- *Improves Blood Cholesterol Levels.*
- *Improves Blood Glucose Control.*
- *Provides you with Fat Soluble Vitamins.*
- *Reduces your [Cancer](#) Risk.*
- *Reduces Inflammation.*
- *Reduces your Heart Disease Risk.*
- *Reduces Pre-Menstrual Symptoms (PMS).*
- *Supports a Healthy Brain.*
- *Supports a Healthy Heart.*
- *Supports a Healthy Liver.*
- *Supports Healthy Lungs.*
- *Supports Healthy Vision.*
- *Supports an Optimal Nervous System.*
- *Supports Strong Bones.*
- *Supports Strong Cell Walls.*
- *Supports a Strong Immune System.*
- *Strong Bones.*

## **Do Dietary Fats Have Any Negative Side Effects?**

Whilst dietary fats offer countless health benefits you still need to moderate your consumption. Otherwise you may be subject to the following negative side effects:

- *Depression.*

- *Heart Disease.*
- *Inability to use Omega 3 EFAs properly.*
- *Increased Blood Glucose Levels.*
- *Increased Cancer Risk.*
- *Increased Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL) Cholesterol Levels.*
- *Inflammation.*
- *Thinning Blood.*
- *Weight Gain.*

## **PROTEIN**

### **What Is Protein?**

Protein is the macronutrient responsible for building, maintaining and repairing your body's cells. It is constructed from long chains of amino acids (chemical compounds that contain carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen). Since a protein can be formed from any number and combination of amino acids there are potentially unlimited types of protein.



### **Essential Amino Acids vs Non-Essential Amino Acids**

There are 22 amino acids in total and these fall into two groups; essential and non-essential. The eight essential amino acids cannot be produced by your body and must be sourced from food. The remaining 14 non-essential amino acids can be produced by your body.

### **Complete Proteins vs Incomplete Proteins**

Complete proteins are those which contain the full eight essential amino acids. All animal proteins (except gelatin) and certain vegetable proteins (including those found in almonds, bananas and brazil nuts) are complete proteins. Incomplete proteins do not contain the full eight essential amino acids but can be combined to create a complete protein. Most vegetable proteins are incomplete proteins.

### **Which Foods Are Good Protein Sources?**

There are countless high quality protein sources available but below are some of my favourites:

- *Almonds.*
- *Beef.*
- *Chicken.*
- *Eggs.*
- *Salmon.*

- Tuna.

### **Does Protein Have Any Additional Benefits?**

Protein does more than just acting as a building block for your body's cells. It also:

- *Assists in the production of Antibodies, Enzymes and Hormones.*
- *Helps Your Blood Clot.*
- *Regulates Important Bodily Processes.*
- *Supports Healthy Weight Loss (by [boosting your metabolism](#) and [suppressing your appetite](#)).*

### **Does Protein Have Any Negative Side Effects?**

Without consuming protein your body would not be able to grow. However, eating too much is not healthy and can cause:

- *Dehydration.*
- *Diabetic Ketoacidosis.*
- *Kidney Stones.*
- *Osteoporosis.*
- *Increased Fat Storage.*

### **MACRONUTRIENTS SUMMARY**

I hope this article has given you a greater understanding of the three main nutrients in our foods. Each macronutrient can support your body and offer numerous health benefits provided that you choose natural sources and don't overindulge. Carbohydrates give you energy when you need it, protein promotes healthy cellular growth and dietary fat supports your body in all the other areas.

There's quite a lot of information to take in at one go so if you just want to learn about one specific area (such as carbohydrate sources or protein benefits) click on the links scattered through the article. I have written separate articles on all the areas referenced in this blog post and these can be accessed via the links.

## **2) Free Fitness Tips Blog Updates**

This month I covered the two main topics of [dietary fats](#) and [macronutrients](#). The full list of blog posts is below:

- [My Fitness Resolutions for 2010](#) - January 31st 2010
- [The Disadvantages of Consuming Too Much Dietary Fat](#) - February 7th 2010
- [6 Excellent Sources of Dietary Fat](#) - February 12th 2010
- [The Three Macronutrients Explained: Carbohydrates, Fats & Protein](#) - February 16th 2010
- [The 3 Macronutrients Explained: Carbohydrates, Fats & Protein](#) - February 16th 2010

(this month's featured article)

- [The Real Deal on Losing the Paunch in Your Stomach: Four Myths about Getting Six Pack Abs](#) - February 20th 2010 (guest post from Nick Clipton)

- [How Much of Each Macronutrient Should You Consume?](#) - February 25th 2010

### 3) Final Words

I hope you enjoyed this month's article. Next month I'm going to continue with the topic of [diet and nutrition](#) and focus on the [micronutrients](#).

Until next time,

Tom Parker (Owner and Creator of Free Fitness Tips)

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The advertisement features a central graphic with two photographs: one of a man in a white shirt and tie, and another of a muscular man. Below these photos are several documents representing meal plans. The text is bold and green, with a white outline.

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