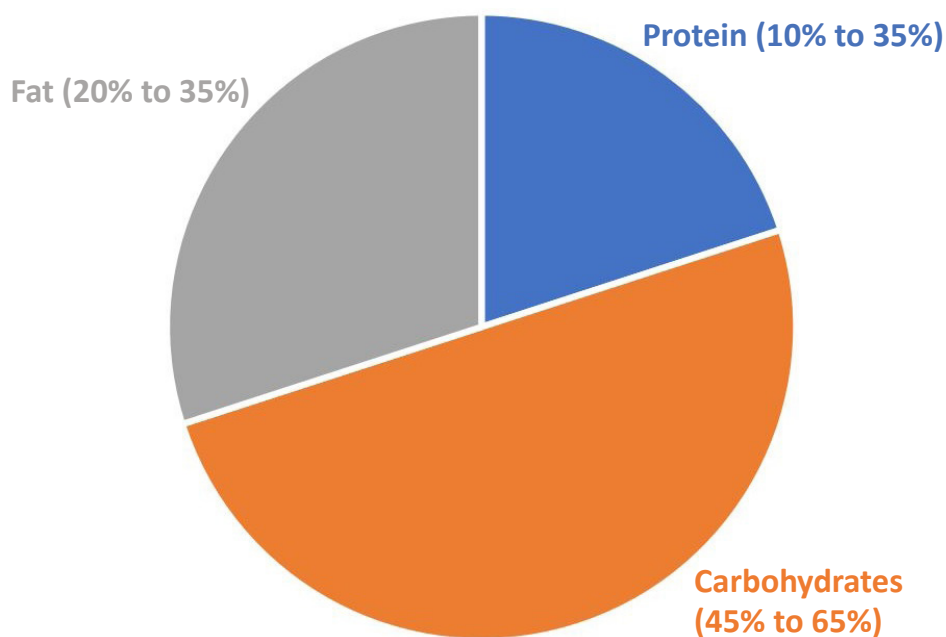


Macronutrients

Macronutrients are nutrients in the foods that you eat. Macronutrients are the nutrients from your diet that you need in the largest quantity. There are 3 macronutrients: fat, carbohydrate and protein. A healthy diet should include all 3 of them (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Macronutrients in a healthy diet for adults*

If you have any questions, ask your care team.



*Based on The Institute of Medicine (IOM) acceptable macronutrient distribution range (AMDR)

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are starches and sugars that make up many of the foods that you eat. The carbohydrates from your diet give you energy. Healthy carbohydrates are also packed with fiber.

Healthy sources of carbohydrates include:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Legumes, such as beans, chickpeas and lentils
- Whole grains, such as oats, quinoa, brown rice and bulgur

Whole grains are those that have not gone through a lot of processing and still keep most of their natural nutrients. Whole grains have lots of fiber, vitamins and minerals and are a healthy type of carbohydrate. Examples of whole grains are brown rice, quinoa and oats.

Refined grains, such as white pasta, white bread and sugary breakfast cereals, do not have much fiber. They may also have too many added sugars. At least half of the grains you eat should come from whole grains. Choosing whole grains more often than refined grains can help meet this goal.

Fats

Fats in your diet help your body store energy and absorb some vitamins.

Unsaturated fats are healthy to eat. Unsaturated fats can help raise the HDL (good) cholesterol and lower the LDL (bad) cholesterol in your body. This may lower your risk of heart disease or stroke. Make unsaturated fats a part of your healthy diet.

Healthy sources of fat include:

- Most plant oils, such as olive oil and avocado oil
- Avocado
- Nuts, such as walnuts, almonds, pecans, pistachios and cashews
- Seeds, such as chia, sesame and sunflower
- Fatty fish, such as salmon, sardines and tuna

Saturated fats are less healthy to eat. Saturated fats may raise your LDL (bad) cholesterol level. This can increase your risk of heart disease. Saturated fats are found in full fat dairy products, fatty animal meats, butter and coconut oil. Limit how much of these you eat. Swapping foods high in saturated fats with foods high in unsaturated fats is healthy. It may also lower your risk of heart disease.

Trans fats are an unhealthy type of fat found in some foods. They harm your health by raising “bad” cholesterol and lowering “good” cholesterol. Try not to eat foods high in trans fats such as prepackaged foods and deep-fried fast food.

Protein

Protein helps your body build and keep muscle. It also helps your body heal. The protein you eat helps form your immune system. Eating protein may help you feel fuller after a meal. Add healthy sources of protein to your diet.

Healthy sources of protein include:

- Eggs
- Legumes, such as beans and lentils
- Soy and soy derivatives, such as soy milk, soy yogurt and tofu
- Lean meats, such as poultry, fish and seafood
- Reduced-fat dairy, such as low fat yogurt, low fat milk and low-fat cottage cheese