

Carbohydrate Counting Using uncooked and cooked weights



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When you are counting carbohydrate, it is very important not to confuse cooked and uncooked weights.

Many starchy carbohydrate foods like potatoes, rice and pasta have very different uncooked and cooked carbohydrate values. This change is due to the amount of water they absorb or lose during cooking. Foods that are boiled, increase in weight during cooking while foods that are baked will lose water and decrease in weight. It is very important to remember this when counting carbohydrate, especially starchy carbohydrate.

Rice, pasta and other dried starchy carbohydrate foods

The labels on dried starchy carbohydrate foods like rice, pasta, noodles, couscous and polenta usually give the carbohydrate value for uncooked (dry), not for cooked weights. When this happens it is usually easier to use cooked values from carbohydrate reference tables.



Examples

The weight of your serving of **cooked** pasta is 156g.

The pack's nutritional label only provides information for uncooked pasta, so use your carbohydrate reference tables value instead. These tables state there is 30g of carbohydrate per 100g cooked pasta.

To calculate the carbohydrate in your serving:

1. Calculate the amount of carbohydrate in 1g of cooked pasta.
2. Calculate the amount of carbohydrate in your serving.

$$1. \quad 30.00 \div 100.00 = 0.30\text{g}$$

$$2. \quad 0.30 \times 156.00 = 46.80\text{g}$$

Your **cooked** portion of rice weighs 125g.



The pack's nutritional label only provides information for uncooked rice, so use your carbohydrate reference tables value instead. These tables state there is 28g of carbohydrate per 100g cooked rice.

To calculate the carbohydrate in your serving:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Calculate the amount of carbohydrate in 1g of cooked rice. | 1. $28 \div 100.00 = 0.28\text{g}$ |
| 2. Calculate the amount of carbohydrate in your serving. | 2. $0.28 \times 125.00 = 35.00\text{g}$ |

Carbohydrate values for foods can vary by brand, cooking method and time. Always aim to follow cooking instructions.

Try doing this yourself with some of your favourites.

Potatoes

Potatoes can be cooked in many different ways – boiled, mashed, baked, roasted, deep fried (chips) etc. The type of potato and cooking method can have a big impact on the weight change and carbohydrate content of potatoes. Always carefully refer to your carbohydrate reference tables to count carbohydrate in potatoes.



Do not swap carbohydrate values from different cooking methods.

Handy Tips

- Keep digital scales, a calculator, a pen and notebook handy in the kitchen.
- Always aim to follow packet cooking instructions.
- Don't confuse uncooked (dry) and cooked weights.
- When you have weighed food put it into a cup or bowl so that you know how much food they hold and you don't have to use the scales every time.
- Become familiar with what foods look like on the plate. This will help you to judge how much carbohydrate is in meals and snacks when you are away from home.
- Find tools that work for you, but aim not to estimate carbohydrate too much – estimating carbohydrate from pictures or without weighing can lead to big differences so your blood glucose control may not be as good as it could.

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