



Carbohydrates: Complex and Simple

Complex carbohydrates have one broad category: **polysaccharides**, or many (poly) individual sugar (saccharide) molecules hooked together. They come in all different lengths and combinations. Overall, complex carbs should always be your first carb choice at mealtime because they enter your bloodstream slower and thus release less insulin. This makes complex carbs a better quality fuel for weight management and better health. But do not fixate on them. Simple carbs are necessary too for things like exercise performance and mental functions.

Simple carbohydrates have two categories: **disaccharides** (two sugar molecules) and **monosaccharides** (one sugar molecule). The monosaccharides go by the names glucose, fructose, and galactose. The disaccharides—maltose (found in beer), sucrose (table sugar), and lactose (found in milk) are just different combinations of the three monosaccharide sugars.

Simple Carbohydrates

Monosaccharides	Disaccharides
Glucose	Maltose (*glucose + glucose)
Fructose	Sucrose (*glucose + fructose)
Galactose	Lactose (*glucose + galactose)

*Glucose is part of each disaccharide; in combination with glucose, fructose, or galactose molecule