

Session 4: Those Confusing Carbs

Guidelines for Carbohydrate Intake

Guidelines are from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) including the RDA (Recommended Dietary Allowance) and from National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM).

Source	Recommendation
DGA - Low	45% of daily calories
DGA - High	65% of daily calories
RDA	130 grams
NASM - Light Activity	3-5 grams per kilogram (wt)
NASM - Moderate Activity	5-7 grams per kilogram (wt)
NASM - High Activity	6-10 grams per kilogram (wt)
NASM - Very High Activity	8-12 grams per kilogram (wt)

Do your calculations using these guidelines following the same steps as when you did the calculations for protein. **Put your carbohydrate range on Your Macro Calculations Page.**

Choosing Your Target

First, follow any guidelines given to you by your medical provider for your carbohydrate intake.

Second, check your food tracker to see how much carbohydrate foods you eat on average. Choose a number close to this and baby step your way towards your desired carbohydrate target. You don't need to change overnight.

Third, choose your target.

- We do not recommend less than 130 grams a day (the RDA) without approval from your medical provider.
- Pick a lower target if you have digestive issues with carbs, if you prefer to eat foods that are proteins and/or fats, or if you have a less active lifestyle.
- Pick a higher target if you prefer foods that are carbs, have a more active lifestyle, or are working to build muscle (carbohydrates spare protein!).