How Much Carbs?

The amount of carbohydrates you eat daily has everything to do with how you look and how you feel.   Want to lose body fat? Eat less carbs. What to feel better? Eat more carbs. What to do?

I like to think of a balanced diet as containing equal amounts of calories from the three macro nutrient sources protein, carbohydrate and fat. I know from experimentation that I feel best when I eat this way. But depending on how much I'm exercising, I may not have my sharpest muscular definition when eating this way.

According to this notion of a balanced diet, at a current bodyweight of 170 pounds Id get 170 grams of protein, 170 grams of carbs, and 75 grams of good fats and oils. This at 4 calories per gram of protein and carbs and 9 calories per gram of fat this amounts to a total of about 2000 calories per day.

But this is not exactly my balance. Lately it's been more like 150 grams of protein, and I add to this total by taking free form amino acids, 120 grams of carbs from fruit, vegetables, and whole grains and 60 grams of fats and oils. As a result, I've been losing body fat with this reduced caloric regiment, of about 1700 calories with a smaller ratio coming from both carbs and fats.

It's important to eat enough carbs to make yourself feel good with enough energy for training and thinking straight. Strenuous carb cutting should only be done only when it's necessary to shed body fat. Low carbs equal to half or less than half of protein intake should be

done three days in a row with carbs equaling protein on the fourth day and then the cycle is repeated. If you don't eat enough carbs your body converts some of its protein supply to carbs to use for energy. So, eating carbs boosts protein uptake. Not eating enough carbs means you are not getting enough dietary fiber, and this can lead to constipation when combined with a high protein (especially meat) diet.

If you are not getting a pump in your workouts, you may not be eating enough carbs, especially before workouts. I get a good 40 to 50 grams of carbs before a workout. I take in an equal amount of carbs and protein after a workout, which amounts to about the same amount as before the training session. I do not rush to get my post workout meal in right after my workout; rather I wait until I start feeling hungry before I eat. Often it takes a while after hard work for my stomach to feel settled. So, I'd rather relax a bit before I start feeding myself.

I find myself eating varying amounts of protein and carbs on different days. It's not exactly the same every day. I rarely go overboard and stuff myself, but if I do happen to eat a little too much one day in celebration, the next day is almost like intermittent fasting, and I end up eating much less and drinking more water. All in all, it balances out and protein, carbs, and fats get used for growth, repair, and energy.