

Every food is a combination of many nutrients. Macronutrients, like carbohydrate, protein and/or fat, as well as vitamins, minerals and plant compounds called phytochemicals interact synergistically in the body as they're being absorbed and metabolized. This means these nutrients interact TOGETHER, not separately as we sometimes view them. While the body of research continues to grow, there are some proven pairings that improve the absorption of certain nutrients or alter how the body responds to that food.

POWERFUL PAIRS

PLANT PROTEIN PAIRS

Plant proteins are incomplete, making pairing an important goal. While research has debunked the need to pair specific plant proteins, its key to diversify plant proteins. Try quinoa and white beans in a salad, wild rice and almonds as a side dish, or chickpeas and edamame in a stir fry.

IRON & VITAMIN C

Iron is crucial for energy and immunity, and many are low in this essential mineral. Increase the bodies absorption of iron by pairing it with foods high in vitamin C. Try a salad with spinach and red bell peppers, cream of wheat with strawberries, or a white bean salad with mandarin oranges.

Strategic Pairing to Balance Blood Sugar

Maintaining healthy blood sugar levels is important for overall health, especially if you're managing diabetes or at higher risk for the chronic disease. Balanced glucose levels can help balance hunger cues, fat metabolism and hormone production, ease late night cravings and keep energy even throughout the day.

CALCIUM & VITAMIN D

Two minerals that are equally important for bone health are calcium and vitamin D. Calcium helps build and repair bone, while vitamin D facilitates calcium absorption. Find calcium in quality dairy products, broccoli, tofu and chia seed. Find vitamin D in fortified foods, egg yolks and fatty fish.

PROTEIN & PRODUCE

Combine protein and produce for fueling snacks to balance blood sugar, add fiber and hydration through the day. Try berries and walnuts, peppers and hummus, celery and peanut butter or an apple and a hard boiled egg.

Over the years, carbs have been demonized but in reality it's the quality of carbs and what they're paired with that impacts health the most. Rather than cutting out grains, fruits, beans and starchy vegetables, look to pairing quality, whole carbs with fiber, healthy fat and quality protein. This pairing "buffers" the rise in blood sugar and helps us maintain even energy throughout the day. Try:

FIBER & HEALTHY FAT

Feeling satisfied after a meal helps us stay energized and productive. To increase satiety, pair foods that are high in fiber with good sources of healthy fat. Try a kale salad with avocado, broccoli slaw with slivered almonds or oatmeal with berries and flaxseed.

CAROTENOIDS & HEALTHY FAT

Carotenoids help support immunity and reduce inflammation. Healthy fats increase the absorption of carotenoids. Pair red, orange and dark green vegetables with nuts, seeds or avocado. Enjoy cut vegetables and guac, wilted spinach in olive oil or squash with pepitas (pumpkin seeds.)

Apple + Peanut Butter
Sweet Potato + Pecans
Brown Rice + Avocado
Roast Potatoes + Chicken & Broccoli
Black Beans + Shrimp & Peppers

Pairing carbs with blood sugar "buffers" slows the rate of digestion and helps your body stay in balance.