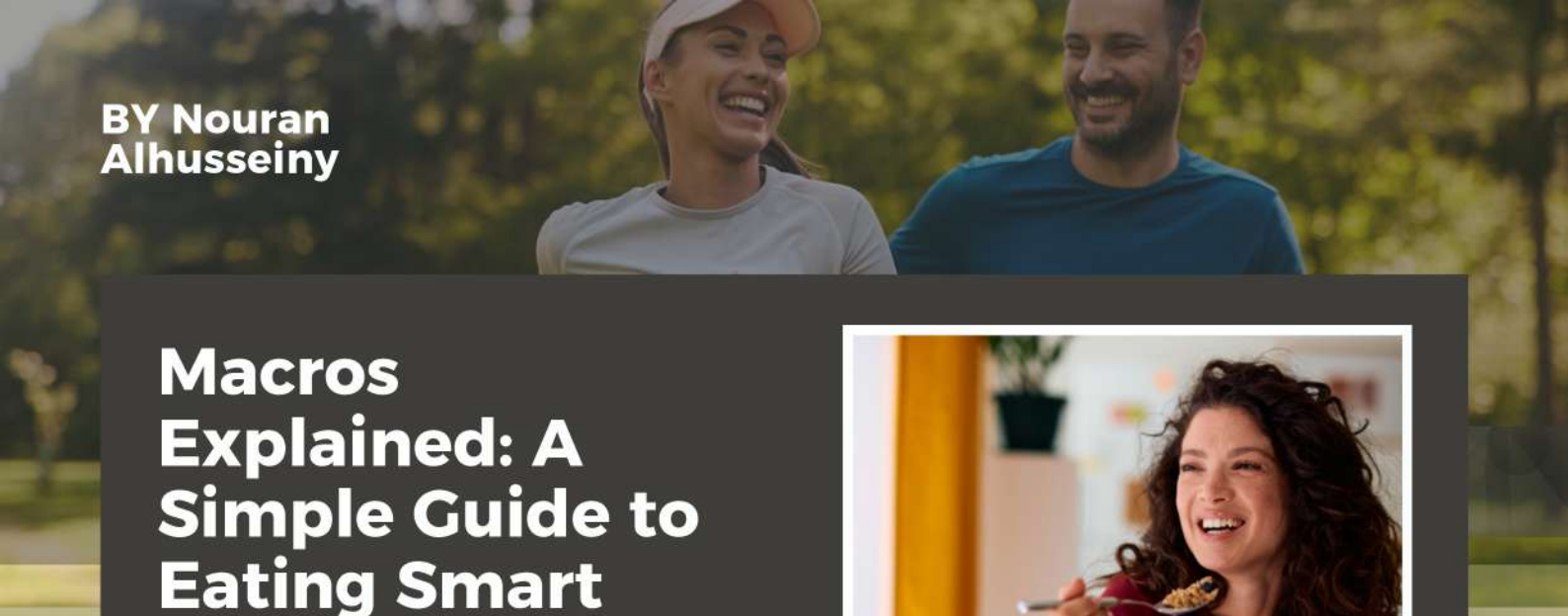


BY Nouran Alhusseiny

Macros Explained: A Simple Guide to Eating Smart

Understanding macros is simple.

If you've ever scrolled through fitness content online, you've definitely heard people throwing around terms like "macros," "hitting your protein," or "carb cycling." It sounds complicated, technical, and honestly? A bit intimidating. But here's the truth: understanding macros is one of the simplest, most powerful tools for taking control of your nutrition. What Even Are Macros? "Macros" is short for macronutrients, the three main nutrients your body needs in large amounts to function properly

Carbohydrates

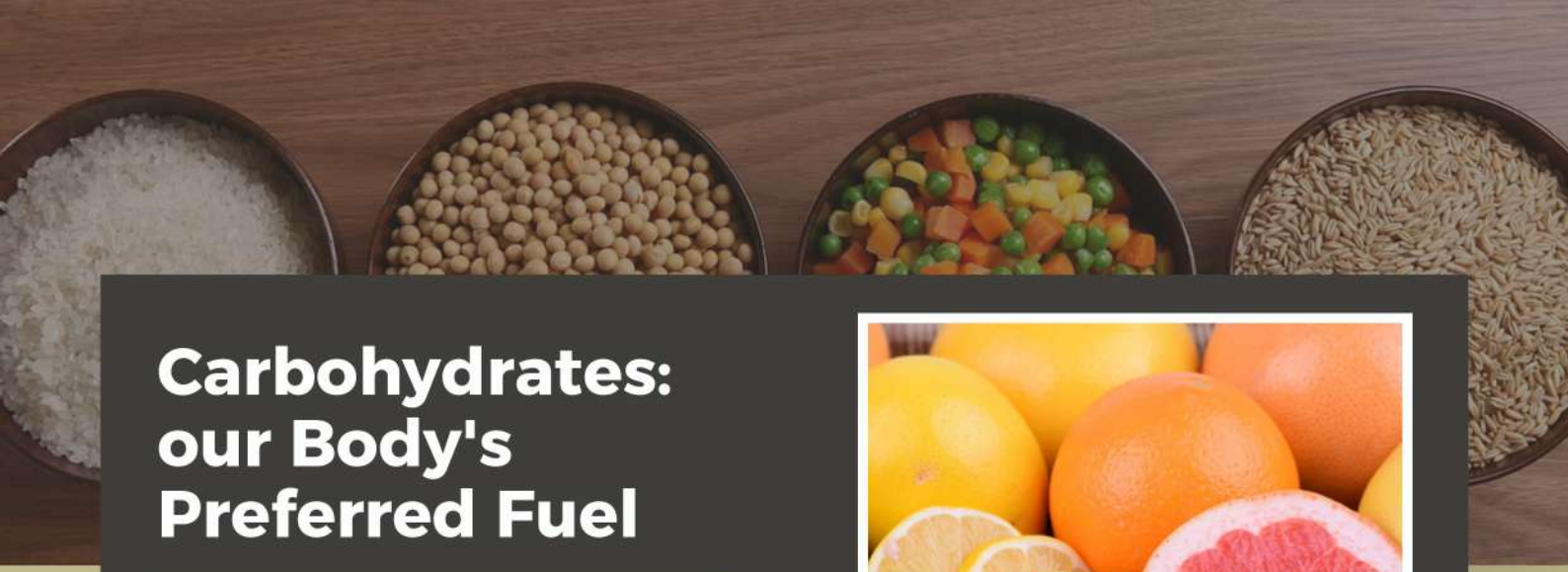
Your Body's Preferred Fuel What they do: C About 50 to 55% of daily calories should come from carbohydrates, though this can vary based on your activity level and goals

Protein

we need from 0.8 to 1.5 per kilogram.

Fats

Fat is essential for: Hormone production (including sex hormones) Absorbing fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K) Brain health and cell structure Long-term energy storage How much you need: T20–35% of your daily calories



Carbohydrates: our Body's Preferred Fuel

Carbs are your body's primary energy source

especially for your brain and during physical activity.
About 50 to 55% of daily calories should come from carbohydrates, though this can vary based on your activity level and goals.
Why you need them: Your brain alone uses about 130 grams of carbohydrates per day just to function.
The recommended dietary allowance of 130 g/d for adults and children is based on the average minimum amount of glucose used by the brain. Without enough carbs, you'll feel foggy, tired, and irritable.

Types of carbs

Complex carbs

(whole grains, legumes, vegetables): Digest slowly, provide steady energy.

Simple carbs

(butter, fatty meats, coconut oil): Fine in moderation

IT is important to understand that carbs don't cause fat gain on their own.

Proteins: The Building Block

Importance

Proteins are comprised of subunits called amino acids.
These subunits provide energy and are essential for the construction of structural units of the body e.g., muscle, bone, and ligaments.
why you need it: Protein is crucial for: Building and repairing muscle tissue Supporting immune function Creating hormones and enzymes Keeping you feeling full longer.

How much you need protein

eed: This is where it gets individual: Sedentary adults: The current recommended dietary allowance (RDA) of protein is 0.8 g/kilogram body weight for sedentary adults, though a more recent analysis notes a value of 1.0 g/kg body weight for the average sedentary adult Recreationally active: About 1.0-1.2 g/kg body weight Regular exercisers/athletes.
People who regularly exercise have higher protein needs of about 1.1–1.5 grams per kilogram of body weight.
People who regularly lift weights, or are training for a running or cycling event need 1.2–1.7 grams per kilogram

Protein timing matters:

Studies now show that it is not just the total protein intake for the day that counts for athletes. The body can best build and maintain muscles when protein is divided relatively evenly throughout the day. Aim to include protein at every meal.

Best sources

- igh-quality protein comes from specific animal and plant-based sources, such as beef, poultry, fish, eggs, milk and dairy products, soy and soy products.
- Including a variety of plant-based sources of protein, such as beans, nuts, and seeds throughout the day can also help to meet protein requirements.

Fat: The Misunderstood Macro

The Misunderstood Macro What it does?

Fat is essential for: Hormone production (including sex hormones) Absorbing fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K)
Brain health and cell structure Long-term energy storage
Why you shouldn't fear it
For years, fat was demonized. But healthy fats are crucial for your body to function properly. The key is choosing the right types of fat.
How much you need: The Dietary Guidelines recommend 20–35% of your daily calories from fat.
The Institute of Medicine calculated an acceptable macronutrient distribution range for fat at 20%-35% of energy. For a 2,000-calorie diet, that's about 44-78 grams of fat per day

Types of fat:

Unsaturated fats

(olive oil, avocados, nuts, fatty fish): These are your friends

Saturated fats

(butter, fatty meats, coconut oil): Fine in moderation

Trans fats

(processed foods, fried foods): Avoid these

Putting It All Together

Your Macro Ratios Standard Macro Ratios: Carbs 45-65% of calories
Protein: 10-35% of calories
Fat: 20-35% of calories
But here's the important part: These are ranges, not rigid rules. Your ideal macro ratio depends on: Your activity level Your goals (weight loss, muscle gain, maintenance) Your body's individual response Your lifestyle and food preferences

Common Macro Mistakes

1-Cutting carbs too low

FYour brain needs carbs to function. Extremely low-carb diets can leave you exhausted, foggy, and irritable. Unless you have a medical reason, don't demonize carbs.

2. Not eating enough protein

This is especially true for males ages 19–59, who often exceed protein recommendations. However, even athletes often get more protein than they need without supplements because their calorie requirements are higher. That said, many young women don't eat enough protein, especially if they're active.

3- Fearing fat

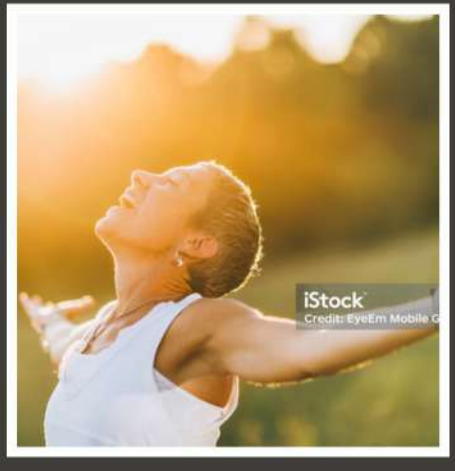
Fat doesn't make you fat. Excess calories do. Don't skip the olive oil, avocado, or nuts—they're essential.

4. Obsessing over perfection

Research suggests that you can lose weight healthily and sustainably regardless of your macronutrient ratio. The most important nutritional factor for weight loss is being in a calorie deficit.

The Bottom Line

Understanding macros isn't about restriction or perfection. It's about knowledge and flexibility.
When you understand what carbs, protein, and fat actually do for your body, you can make informed choices that support your goals—without following rigid diet rules that make you miserable.



Here's what I want you to remember:

- All three macros are essential (yes, even carbs!)
- Your ideal macro ratio is individual Focus on whole, nutrient-dense foods
- first Tracking can be a learning tool, not a life sentence Balance
- consistency beat perfection every time You don't need to be perfect. Y
- ou just need to be informed and consistent.

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