



ASK: BERNADETTE ABRAHAM

Personal Trainer  
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# Q+A Quinoa Confusion!

**DEAR BERNADETTE:** Quinoa confusion. Is it a carb or a protein?

— Linda, via email

**DEAR LINDA:** According to NutritionData.com, a cup of cooked quinoa (pronounced keenwa) contains 8 grams of protein, 39 grams of carbs, and 4 grams of fat. If you're a carb-phobe, do not avoid this near perfect food. The best foods to eat for protein are not necessarily the ones that are the highest in protein. The protein in quinoa is of better quality than that of meat due to the presence of all eight essential amino acids needed for humans. Although it is known as a grain, it is technically a seed that is high in quality protein, essential fats, calcium and iron, vitamin E and several of the B vitamins. It is also gluten-free, high in fiber and low in sodium, making it as close to a perfect food as you can get.

↳ **TIP:** Swap couscous or rice for quinoa to amp up the fitness-boosting power of your meal.

**HAVE A QUESTION FOR OUR EXPERTS?**

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## { PICK IT KICK IT } Get Sugar Smart

To remember the maximum amount of sugar you should consume per day, think of a quarter: 25 grams. That's equal to about 100 calories. Stay within this range by choosing complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, over simple ones, eat more vegetables than fruit, and opt for low-fat dairy over "non-fat." Here are some examples of how you can cut down on simple sugars.



### PICK IT

#### ✓ HOMEMADE PB PROTEIN PUDDING

Mix together 1 scoop chocolate whey protein powder + 1 tbsp natural peanut butter + 6 oz fat-free plain Greek yogurt  
Sugar: 9 grams.



### KICK IT

#### ✗ REESE'S PEANUT BUTTER CUPS

Toss these lingering Halloween treats, stat! 5 Miniatures are equivalent to nearly 6 teaspoons of sugar, with unhealthy saturated fat to boot.  
Sugar: 23 grams.



#### ✓ COTTAGE CHEESE WITH FRESH FRUIT

Mix ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese + ¼ cup blackberries.  
Sugar: 5 grams.  
TIP: Don't buy fat-free; it contains extra sugar for taste.

OPT FOR "LOW-FAT" VERSIONS.



#### ✗ FRUIT-BOTTOM COTTAGE CHEESE

There may be quality protein in here, but one of the first items on its ingredients list is "sugar." Just one serving packs in 8 grams of it.

"FAT-FREE" MEANS MORE SUGAR!



#### ✓ 100% WHOLE-GRAIN OATS

This complex carb keeps blood sugar levels stable. A ½-cup serving contains 0 grams of sugar. Plus, eating 3 servings per day may help reduce belly fat, shows research.

ADD SOME TO YOUR SHAKES!



#### ✗ INSTANT FLAVORED OATMEAL

A single-serving package has 12 grams of sugar. The added calories take away from the superior nutritional benefits of whole grains.



## B vitamins for PMS

**Dodge** pre-menstrual belly bloat and irritability by eating plenty of seafood, whole grains and five daily servings of fruits and veggies. You'll feed your body with thiamin and riboflavin, two energizing B vitamins that studies show may help reduce PMS symptoms by about 30 percent.

**FIT FACT:** Vigorous training can deplete vitamin B-12 levels, since your body uses this vitamin for repair and oxygen delivery. Chicken, eggs and fish are top food sources.



**FIT TIP:** Eat avocados to net vitamin B-6.