

**Name/Title:** **Calculating Fat, Carbohydrates & Protein**

**Purpose of Event:** The purpose of this activity is to instruct students in calculating the percentages of fat, protein and carbohydrates in their favorite foods.

**Suggested Grade Level:** 6th and Up

**Materials Needed:** Paper, pencil, a calculator is optional, and a government publication titled, [The Nutritive Value of Foods](#) (72-page booklet, #G72).

### Description of Idea

The students begin by choosing 3 of their favorite foods. The students must then locate 2 pieces of information before they can begin their calculations. First, identify the total grams of fat, protein, and carbohydrates in each food. Second, identify the total calories in each food.

The next step is to perform the calculations. For example, to perform the calculation for the percentage of carbohydrates a student must take the total grams of carbohydrates and multiply by 4. (Remember, there are 4 calories in every gram of carbohydrates, 4 in every gram of protein, and 9 in every gram of fat). That number represents the total calories from carbohydrates. That number is then divided by the total calories in the food. The answer is a decimal, but that number actually is the percentage of calories from carbohydrates. We should have 55% of our total calories from carbohydrates. So, if the number is 0.347 then 35% of the calories from that food is from carbohydrates. My students really enjoy this activity because they can see the percentages of fat, protein and carbohydrates in their favorite foods.

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Submitted by **Debbie Rudy-Lack** who teaches at Kenston Middle School in Bainbridge Township, OH. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 5/18/2000**. Printed 4653 times since 8/24/2001.

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