
ENERGY DENSITY OF FOODS

Foods can be categorized according to their energy density. Those with low energy density have fewer calories per bite. Those with high energy density have more calories per bite. In her book *The Volumetrics Eating Plan*, Barbara Rolls, Ph.D., a professor of nutrition sciences at Pennsylvania State University, uses the following categories:

CATEGORY	CALORIES PER GRAM	FOODS IN THIS CATEGORY
Very low energy density	0–0.6	Fruits and nonstarchy vegetables, nonfat milk, broth-based soups
Low energy density	0.6–1.5	Starchy vegetables, grains, breakfast cereals served with low-fat milk, low-fat meats, beans and legumes, low-fat mixed dishes such as chili and spaghetti
Medium energy density	1.5–4.0	Meats, cheeses, pizza, French fries, salad dressings, bread, pretzels, ice cream, cake
High energy density	4.0–9.0	Crackers, chips, chocolate candies, cookies, nuts, butter, oils

Diabetes Self-Management, “More Food, Less You” by Betty Kovacs, MS, RD

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