



HEALTH FOR LIFE

Nutrition Guidelines for Diabetes

Eating healthy foods and keeping a healthy body weight are very important parts of a diabetes treatment plan. A healthy diet and weight helps to keep your blood sugar under control. Keeping your blood sugar under control helps to protect against the long term problems of diabetes.

In order to control your blood sugar, it is very important to limit the carbohydrate in your diet. Sources of carbohydrates are starches, milk, fruits, and sweets. You do not need to purchase foods labeled “dietetic.” Foods that are good for you are good for the rest of your household. The following guidelines will help you change the way you eat and help keep your blood sugar under control.

- **Eat three balanced meals a day at regular times.**

Do not skip meals. Eat a bedtime snack if you take insulin or an oral diabetes medicine. Choose a snack with both a carbohydrate and protein source, such as 4 - 6 cheese and crackers, ½ a sandwich, or 1 cup skim milk and 3 graham cracker squares. You may need snacks in between your meals to prevent low blood sugar and to control hunger. Check with your dietician.

- **Avoid sugar and sweets.**

Avoid foods high in sugar such as candy, jelly, syrups, regular soda pop and other sugar sweetened drinks. Remember, your body does not know the difference between table sugar and fruit sugar (fructose) so drink fruit juices in moderation. Sweets, such as cookies, cakes, ice cream, pie and other rich desserts should only be eaten on special occasions. Sources of sugar include table sugar, brown sugar, honey and fructose. Reading food labels and looking for words that end in “ose” and “ol” can help you identify forms of sugar. If a form of sugar is listed as one of the first three ingredients or if several forms of sugar are listed further down in the ingredient list, avoid the food product.

- **Limit the total fat in your diet.**

This will help control your weight and cholesterol levels. Avoid fried foods, high fat meats, whole milk dairy products, fried snack foods, fast foods and high fat desserts. Limit foods containing added fats, especially those that have saturated fats, such as butter, cream cheese, sour cream, gravies and salad dressings. Use oils, margarine, and oil-based salad dressings in moderation.

Select A Variety Of Foods From The Following Groups:

Meat and Meat Substitutes:

Include one 2 - 3 ounce serving at lunch and dinner. A 1 oz. protein source also may be included at breakfast and bedtime snack.

- Beef, pork (lean cuts 3 times per week)
- Cheese (low fat)
- Chicken, turkey (white meat, no skin)
- Cottage Cheese (low fat)
- Eggs (yolks, 3 times per week)
- Fish, seafood
- Lean lunch meat (ham, turkey)
- Peanut butter

Breads and Starches (including starchy vegetables):

Include 2 - 3 servings at each meal and 1 - 2 for snacks, if needed. One serving equals ½ cup, 1 ounce, one slice of bread or ¾ cup dry cereal. Remember breads and starches are high in carbohydrates and can raise your blood sugar if eaten in large amounts. Try to choose whole-grain products to increase fiber in your diet.

- Bagels
- Biscuits
- Bread
- Buns
- Crackers
- English muffins
- Macaroni
- Noodles
- Pasta
- Popcorn
- Pretzels
- Rice
- Rolls
- Soup
- Spaghetti
- Stuffing
- Taco shells
- Unsweetened cereals

Starchy Vegetables (1/2 cup cooked = 1 serving):

- Dried beans
- Lima Beans
- Corn
- Mixed vegetables
- Peas
- Potatoes
- Squash

Vegetables:

3 - 5 servings a day

Low calorie vegetables can be eaten as desired. Limit starchy vegetables as indicated in "Bread and Starches" section. Raw or cooked low calorie vegetables are good to include, such as green beans, broccoli, carrots, tomatoes, celery, and lettuce salad.

Fruits:

Include to 2 - 4 servings a day. A serving size is ½ cup of fruit or juice, ¼ cup of dried fruit, or one small fresh fruit. Keep in mind that fruit contains a natural sugar.

- Dried fruit
- Unsweetened fruit juice
- Canned fruit, if canned in natural juice or drained if in light syrup
- Fresh fruit
- Unsweetened frozen fruit

Milk:

Try to have 2 - 3 servings a day. A serving size is 1 cup of skim milk or sugar-free yogurt. Include serving with meals where meat or meat substitutes are not included.

- Milk (1%, skim)
- Plain or sugar-free, fruited yogurt
- Diet instant breakfast mixes
- Buttermilk (low fat)
- Diet instant cocoa mixes

Fats:

Limit your intake of fat if you are reducing calories for weight control. As part of a healthy diet use vegetable fats, especially canola, olive or peanut oils in place of animal fats. Use reduced fat products, if desired. A serving size is 1 tsp. mayonnaise, margarine or oil, or 1 Tbsp. salad dressing.

- Margarine
- Nuts
- Salad dressing
- Mayonnaise
- Olives
- Canola, corn or Olive oil

Free Foods Allowed As Desired:

The following foods should not raise your blood sugar. A serving of a free food contains under 20 calories.

- Bouillon or broth
- Diet pop
- Sugar-free popsicles
- Catsup
- Dill pickles
- Sugar-free gums and mints
- Club soda
- Lemon, lime
- Tomato juice, V-8 Juice
- Cocoa powder
- Mustard
- Unsweetened carbonated water
- Diet cocoa mix
- Non-stick pan spray
- Vinegar
- Diet gelatin
- Salad greens
- Coffee or tea without sugar or creamer added
- Diet syrup (limit to 2 Tbsp. a day)
- Herbs and spices, sugar-free seasonings
- Diet jelly or jam (limit to 2 tsp. a day)
- Raw or cooked **non-starch** vegetables
- Sugar substitutes [Aspartame (Equal®), Saccharin (Sweet and Low®, Sugar Twin®), Acesulfame potassium (Sweet One®)]

Foods To Avoid Because of Sugar or Fat Content:

- Cake
- Gravies
- Pastries
- Candy
- Honey
- Pie
- Chocolate milk
- Ice milk
- Popsicles
- Cookies
- Ice cream
- Preserves
- Doughnuts
- Instant cocoa mix
- Pudding
- Fried foods
- Jams
- Regular gelatin
- Frosting
- Jellies
- Sherbet
- Frozen yogurt
- Marshmallows
- Soda-pop
- Granola Products
- Milkshakes
- Sugar coated cereal
- Granola
- Molasses
- Syrup
- Instant breakfast mix
- Sugar-sweetened yogurt
- Drink mixes made with sugar
- Alcoholic beverages (unless allowed by your doctor)

Sample Menu (1800 Calories)

Breakfast

- ½ cup unsweetened cooked cereal, such as oatmeal or Cream of Wheat
- 2 slices toast with 2 tsp. margarine and 2 tsp. diet jelly
- 1 cup skim milk
- ½ cup unsweetened fruit juice
- Coffee or tea

Lunch

- Sandwich made with 2 slices bread, 2 - 3 oz. lean sliced meat or cheese and low-fat mayonnaise and mustard
- Fresh vegetables or salad
- Small fresh fruit
- ¾ oz. pretzels or 1 cup broth-based soup
- Diet soda

Dinner

- 3 oz. roasted meat, fish or chicken
- 1 cup potatoes, noodles or rice
- 1 slice of bread or small dinner roll
- 2 tsp. margarine
- Cooked non-starchy vegetable and salad
- ½ cup canned fruit
- 1 cup skim milk
- Coffee, tea or diet pop

Evening Or Bedtime Snack Ideas

Choose 1 Selection

- ¾ cup unsweetened cereal with 1 cup skim milk
- 5 - 6 saltine crackers with 1 ounce low-fat cheese
- 1 cup sugar-free yogurt
- 3 Graham crackers with 1 cup skim milk
- ½ sandwich
- 1 ounce pretzels and 1 cup skim milk
- 3 cups popcorn and 1 cup skim milk

Sugar-free Snack Ideas

- Fresh vegetables
- Diet Jello
- Diet popsicles
- Sugar-free beverages