

# Nutrition Know-How



... diabetes

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# Nutrition Know-How

If you have diabetes, you know you have to take care of a lot of things every day: watching your blood sugar levels, keeping track of your diabetes pills and/or insulin needs, and sticking to the treatment plan from your health care provider.

Are you also paying attention to how and what you eat? Good nutrition is very important in managing existing diabetes and reducing the risk of diabetes complications.

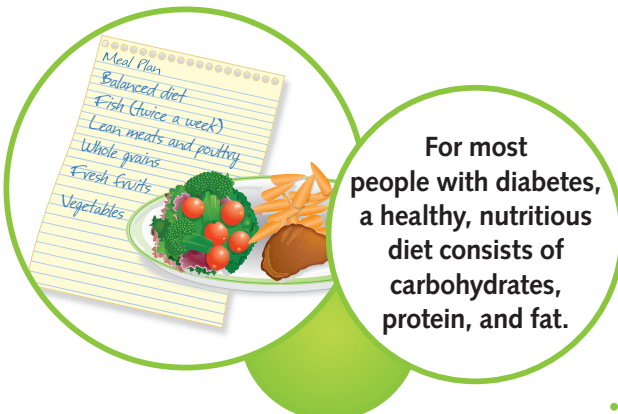
A healthy diet is one that is high in nutrients with a moderate number of calories per serving. Many patients eat diets that exceed the recommended number of calories per day and lack a number of nutrients.

A few simple facts can start to increase your Nutrition Know-How—and help create a meal plan that will lead to a healthier you!

## What is a **Diabetes Meal Plan**?

A diabetes meal plan tells you how much and what kinds of food and drinks you can choose and how much to have at meals and snacks. A good meal plan should fit in with your schedule and eating habits. The right plan will help you improve your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol numbers. It will also help you keep track of your weight. A balanced eating plan is filled with fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and a controlled amount of lean meats and poultry. Try to eat fish at least twice a week. Also, cut back on beverages and foods with added sugars. Pay attention to how much you eat—even with healthful foods, you can have too much of a good thing!

**Carbohydrates** are 1 of 3 sources of calories or energy that we need in our diets (the other 2 are protein and fat). Carbohydrates provide most of the energy needed in our daily lives and tend to have the greatest effect on blood sugar. Carbohydrates are found in fruits, vegetables, beans, dairy foods, and breads—as well as mayonnaise, ketchup, and mustard.



**For most people with diabetes, a healthy, nutritious diet consists of carbohydrates, protein, and fat.**

... diabetes

The amount listed is for the serving size shown.

**Are you eating more, less, or the same?**

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
<b>8 servings per container</b>	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
<b>Amount per 2/3 cup</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>% DV*</b>	
<b>12%</b>	<b>Total Fat</b> 8g
<b>5%</b>	<b>Saturated Fat</b> 1g
	<b>Trans Fat</b> 0g
<b>0%</b>	<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg
<b>7%</b>	<b>Sodium</b> 160mg
<b>12%</b>	<b>Total Carbs</b> 37g
<b>14%</b>	<b>Dietary Fiber</b> 4g
	<b>Sugars</b> 1g
	<b>Added Sugars</b> 0g
	<b>Protein</b> 3g
<b>10%</b>	<b>Vitamin D</b> 2mcg
<b>20%</b>	<b>Calcium</b> 260mg
<b>45%</b>	<b>Iron</b> 8mg
<b>5%</b>	<b>Potassium</b> 235mg
<small>* Footnote on Daily Values (DV) and calories reference to be inserted here.</small>	

Compare your serving size to figure out the number of carbs you are eating.

Total carbs per serving (in grams) are listed on the label.

Half the grams of dietary fiber should be subtracted from the total grams of carbs if the food or drink contains more than 5 grams of dietary fiber.

**Protein** comes from meat, chicken, fish, dairy products (such as cheese, milk, and yogurt), beans, and some vegetables. In following a nutritious diet, try to eat more chicken and fish than red meat, and trim extra fat off all meat. Also choose nonfat or reduced-fat dairy products.

**Fat** is contained in butter, margarine, oils, and many meat and dairy products. Your meals will be more nutritious if you eat less fat, especially saturated fat and trans fats.

**Saturated fat** is found in meat, chicken skin, butter, 2% or whole milk, ice cream, and cheese.

**Trans fat** is produced when liquid oils are turned into solids.

Rather than use butter or stick margarine, choose soft margarine in a tub that lists a liquid oil, such as soybean or canola oil, as an ingredient.



## Count Those Carbs

“Carbohydrate counting” is another way to manage the food you eat to help keep your blood sugar levels as normal as possible. For some people with diabetes, counting carbs can help them strike the right balance between what they eat and the insulin required to handle the rise in their blood sugar after eating.

In carb counting, your health care provider or diet planner can help you determine how many carbs you need each day—and how to spread that amount over all your meals and snacks, so your blood glucose levels do not get too high or low. If you choose to count carbs, then you’ll need to learn how many carbs are in different kinds of food and drinks, and how much insulin your body will need to “cover” the total grams of carbs that you have eaten.

Add up all the grams of carbs in the food and drinks in a meal you plan to eat. If a food has 5 grams or more of fiber in a serving, subtract half the fiber grams from the total grams of carbs for a more accurate estimate of the food’s carb content.

By counting carbs, you can know when your blood sugar levels may rise due to eating, and can follow your treatment plan to keep your blood sugar under control.

### Online Tools May Help

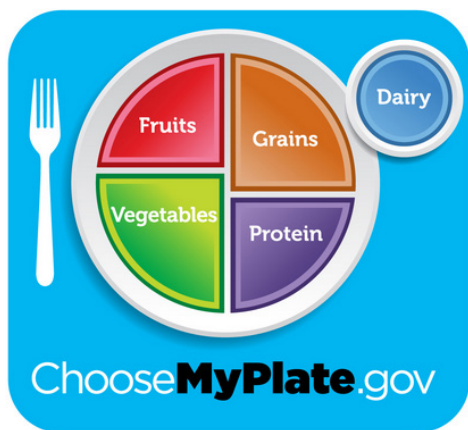
The American Diabetes Association has an online resource: My Food Advisor (<http://tracker.diabetes.org/>). This tool provides you with recipes, cooking tips, and a meal plan. When you use My Food Advisor, you are able to determine how many carbohydrates are in the foods you are eating.



## Create Your Plate

Have you ever wondered how to fill your plate? If you have diabetes, your plate may be your best friend when it comes to managing your condition. A simple strategy, called “Choose My Plate,” may help you make sure that you are eating a variety of nutritious foods at each meal for better diabetes management.

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### Step up to good nutrition

If you have access to a computer, find out about all the latest news on following a healthy diet and being active at [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov). On this Web site, you'll learn to make smart nutritional choices from every food group as well as how to find your balance between food and physical activity, get the most nutrition out of your calories, and stay within your daily calorie needs.

### Dairy

Include sources of dairy products in your diet. It is an easy way to get calcium and high-quality protein. Many dairy products, like no-sugar-added, fat-free yogurt, can be eaten as a dessert.

#### Best choices and general tips

- Fat-free or low-fat (1% milk)
- Plain nonfat yogurt
- Nonfat light yogurt without added sugar
- If you are trying to switch to lower fat dairy products, take the time to get used to the taste and texture difference.



### Protein

Meat and meat substitutes, such as soy products and cheese, are great sources of protein. Meats do not contain carbohydrates, so they do not raise blood glucose levels. A balanced meal plan usually has about 2 to 5 ounces of meat. All the plant-based protein foods and any breaded meats contain carbohydrates.

#### Best choices and general tips

- The best choices are the cuts of meats and meat alternatives that are lower in saturated fat and calories.
- Try to include dried beans into several meals per week. They are a great source of protein and are loaded with fiber.
- Eat a variety of fish and shellfish (catfish, flounder, haddock, herring, orange roughy, salmon, tilapia, trout, tuna, crab, imitation shellfish, lobster, scallops, and shrimp).
- Eat poultry without the skin.
- Select and Choice grades of beef trimmed of fat including: chuck, rib, rump roast, round, sirloin, cubed, flank, porterhouse, T-bone steak, tenderloin.

## Nonstarchy Vegetables

There are 2 types of vegetables—starchy and nonstarchy. Starchy vegetables like potatoes, corn, and peas are considered grains, since they contain more carbohydrates. There are numerous nonstarchy vegetables (below are a few common ones).

- Artichoke
- Asparagus
- Beans (green, wax, Italian)
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage (green, bok choy, Chinese)
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Greens (collard, kale, mustard, turnip)
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Peppers
- Radishes
- Salad greens (chicory, endive, escarole, lettuce, romaine, spinach, arugula, radicchio, watercress)
- Squash (cushaw, summer, crookneck, spaghetti, zucchini)
- Sugar snap peas
- Tomato
- Turnips

### Best choices and general tips

- Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables and vegetable juices without added sodium, fat, or sugar (if using canned or frozen vegetables, look for ones that say low sodium or no salt added on the label).
- Frozen or canned vegetables in sauces are higher in both fat and sodium.
- If using canned vegetables with sodium, drain the vegetables and rinse with water then warm in fresh water. This will cut back on how much sodium is left on the vegetables.

## Fruits

There are many fruits to choose. Listed below are a few common ones:

- |               |          |                |
|---------------|----------|----------------|
| • Apple       | • Grapes | • Pear         |
| • Apricot     | • Kiwi   | • Plum         |
| • Banana      | • Mango  | • Raspberries  |
| • Blueberries | • Orange | • Strawberries |
| • Cherries    | • Peach  | • Watermelon   |

### Best choices and general tips

- Choose fresh, frozen, or canned fruit without added sugars in juice or light syrup.
- Dried fruit and fruit juice are also nutritious choices, but the portion sizes are small, so they may not be as filling as other choices.

#### **Eat the Rainbow**

Enjoy lots of vegetables and fruits and the variety of nutrients they offer by choosing from the rainbow of colors available.





## Lose Weight for a **Healthier You**

You can see it every day: many Americans are overweight. In the United States, 154.7 million men and women age 20 and older are overweight or obese. It has become a serious threat to our nation's health, too: being overweight or obese increases the risk for diabetes and other serious health problems, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stroke, and heart disease. An important and easy way to check if you are overweight is to use a tape measure around your mid-waist (relax and breathe out when you do this).

### **Risky numbers**

If your waist measurement is equal to or more than 40 inches (for men) or 35 inches (for women), it can raise your risk for type 2 diabetes. If being overweight is a factor for you, losing weight could help you reduce the risk of diabetes or better manage your diabetes if you already have it.

### **Importance of healthy weight loss**

It may not seem easy to begin a weight-loss program. But the good news is that it's not as hard as you think. A healthy diet and exercise plan may help you better manage your weight and diabetes. Talk with your health care provider to come up with a plan to reach a healthy weight. Taking some simple everyday steps (described in this booklet) may help you lead a healthier life and better control your diabetes.

## Remember

Physical activity may also cause a change in your body's glucose (blood sugar) level. But with the help of your health care provider, you can manage your blood sugar, be physically active, and still fit your favorite foods into your meal plan. Sticking to a nutritious meal plan can help you achieve better control of your diabetes.

You are not alone if body weight and diabetes are a concern. With your health care provider's help, you can make progress towards a healthy weight and managing diabetes. It's easier than you may think!



**Too big  
around the  
middle? Discuss  
your number  
with your health  
care provider.**

## Notes

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