



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

HOW TO PLAN YOUR MEALS

Using a 9-Inch dinner plate is one easy way to think about how to eat with diabetes.



In general, it's a good idea to avoid drinking calories—**water** is the ultimate healthy beverage!

LEAN PROTEIN

Fill a fourth of your plate with healthy protein choices like lean meats, chicken, turkey and fish. Tofu, nuts and beans can also be a good source of protein.

STARCHES / GRAINS

Fill a fourth of your plate with starches / whole grains like bread, rice, pasta and starchy vegetables. Choose whole grains (like whole wheat bread, brown rice, quinoa) whenever possible.

NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

Fill half of your plate with vegetables that are low in carbs like broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus, lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, zucchini, eggplant and cabbage.



Use healthy oils and fats (like **olive oil** or **canola oil**) for cooking and on salads.

REMEMBER: The one way to know how different meals affect your blood sugar is to test in pairs: test before the first bite of a meal and then two hours after the meal. Talk to your doctor about what targets you should be shooting for.

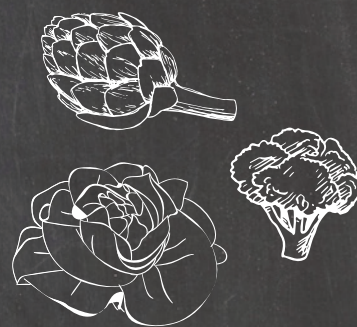
PERFECT PORTIONS

—YOUR GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING—

PROTEIN



NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES



STARCHES & GRAINS



DRESSING/
MAYONNAISE
AVOCADO/
PEANUT BUTTER



FATS

BUTTER/
OLIVE OIL



Many dietitians recommend that people with diabetes eat two servings of fruit per day and two servings of milk or yogurt. Talk to your dietitian / diabetes educator about what's right for you.

PERFECT PORTIONS

—YOUR GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING—



STARCHES

Bread (includes bagels, biscuits, cornbread, English muffins, pita bread, etc.)

Pancakes & Waffles

Cereal

Crackers / Potato Chips

Tortillas / Taco Shells

Popcorn



STARCHY VEGETABLES

Corn

Potatoes

Sweet potatoes/yams

Parsnips

Squashes / pumpkin



WHOLE GRAINS

Barley

Brown Rice

Steel cut oats

Bulgur

Wild rice

Quinoa

Millet

Wheat berries

Farro



NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

Green Beans

Broccoli

All leafy greens

Lettuces

Celery

Beets

Bell peppers

Cabbage

Sugar snap peas

Radishes

Artichokes

Spinach

Mushrooms

Turnips

Cucumber

Okra

Asparagus

Carrots

Cauliflower

Kale



PROTEIN

Lean Meats & Poultry

(avoid bacon,

cold cuts, sausage)

Fish

Tofu

Low-Fat Cheese

Low-Fat Cottage Cheese

Eggs



FATS

Oil / butter

Peanut butter

Avocado

Salad Dressing

Please refer to our “Diabetes: What To Eat Putting Meals Together” PDF for more information about exact serving sizes, nutrition information and classification of different foods.



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

HEALTHY EATING GUIDE

First and foremost, it's important to recognize that there is no perfect meal plan that works for everyone with diabetes. The right diet for you is the one that keeps your numbers in a safe place. **HERE ARE SOME BASIC GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHY EATING.**



DON'T DRINK YOUR CALORIES. A good rule of thumb is that other than milk, you never want to drink a calorie. That means avoiding beverages like soda, fruit juice, energy drinks or sweet tea—all of these have added calories and carbs that can cause weight gain.



BALANCE YOUR PLATE. A healthy diet for everyone, not just people with diabetes, is centered on fruits and vegetables, lean protein and whole grains. If most of what you eat falls in these categories, you're in a good place.



KEEP AN EYE ON PORTION SIZES. How much you eat can have an even bigger impact on your blood glucose than what you eat. You may want to start with measuring your food as you start to learn how to estimate healthy portion sizes.



READ FOOD LABELS. Recognizing the amounts and type of carbohydrates, fiber, fats and calories in the foods you commonly eat can give you a better understanding of how the meal will affect your diabetes and your health.



USE YOUR METER. Checking your blood glucose can help you see which food choices are right for your body. Test before a meal and then two hours afterwards to see which foods / meals keep your blood glucose in your target range.










SEEK OUT AN EXPERT. It's a great idea to see a diabetes educator or a dietitian (RD, CDE) who specializes in diabetes to personalize your meal plan based on your specific health issues, as well as your lifestyle and what you like to eat.

DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

PUTTING MEALS TOGETHER

These lists will help you figure out how to personalize your meals and eat the foods you love in a balanced way.

Portion control is SO important for people with diabetes. These foods lists will help you know how many servings of each type of food to eat each day and show you what amount is **ONE** serving size of many common foods. It all starts with how many calories your healthcare team has told you si right for you to eat. Once you know that, you can use the table below to figure out how many servings of meat, starches, fat, etc. is right for you.

AMOUNT OF SERVINGS PER DAY					
CALORIES / DAY	1200	1600	1800	2000	2200
 Starches / Whole Grains	5	7	8	9	10
 Fruits	3	3	3	4	4
 Dairy	2	3	3	3	3
 Sweets, Desserts, & Other Carbs*	Talk to your dietician or diabetes educator about how to substitute foods from the Sweets, Desserts & Other Carbohydrates list with other carb-containing foods. The calorie and fat count in these foods may be higher.				
 Nonstarchy vegetables	3	4	5	6	6
 Meat & Meat Substitutes	4 oz	6 oz	6 oz	7 oz	8 oz
 Fats	3	5	6	6	7

AN EXAMPLE

Mary has been told that she should eat **1800** calories per day by her dietician, which means that she can have **8 servings** of starch each day. She decides to have two servings of starch for breakfast (eating two pieces of toast with two scrambled eggs) 3 servings at lunch (1 cup of pasta with chicken and broccoli), 1 serving for her afternoon snack of 3 cups of popcorn and 2 servings at dinner (1 small baked potato and ½ cup of white beans in addition to her fish with spinach salad).

DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

STARCHES / WHOLE GRAINS

Prepare and eat starchy foods with as little added fat as possible, and choose whole-grains whenever you can.

IN GENERAL, A SINGLE SERVING OF STARCH IS:

1/3 cup of cooked rice or pasta
1 oz. of a bread product (like 1 slice of bread)
1/2 cup of cooked grain, cereal or starchy vegetable
3/4 to 1 oz. of most snack foods

EACH SERVING ON THIS PAGE CONTAINS

15 grams
carbohydrates

0-3 grams
protein

0-1 grams
fat

80
calories

STARCHY VEGETABLES

	SERVING SIZE
Corn	1/2 cup
Corn on the cob	1/2 large ear
Green peas	1/2 cup
Baked potato w/ skin (3 oz.)	1
Boiled (3 oz.)	1/2 cup
Mashed w/ milk & fat	1/2 cup
Winter Squash	1 cup
Sweet potato/yam, plain	1/2 cup
Parsnips, fresh cooked	1/2 cup

WHOLE GRAINS

Choose these whenever possible for your starch as they have lots of fiber, vitamins and minerals

Barley	1/3 cup
Quinoa	1/3 cup
Farro	1/3 cup
Millet	1/3 cup
Brown Rice	1/3 cup

BREAD

Bagel (large, about 4 oz.)	1/4
Biscuit (2 1/2" across)*	1
Bread (whole wheat, white, raisin, pumpernickel, sourdough or rye) (1 oz)	1 slice
English muffin	1/2 muffin
Hot dog or hamburger bun	1/2 bun
Roll (plain, dinner)	1 roll (1 oz.)
Ciabatta	1 oz.
Pancake (4" across, 1/4" thick)	1
Tortilla (corn or flour, 6" across)	1
Taco shells (5" diameter)	2
Waffle (4" square or 4" diameter)*	1



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

STARCHES / WHOLE GRAINS

Prepare and eat starchy foods with as little added fat as possible, and choose whole-grains whenever you can.

IN GENERAL, A SINGLE SERVING OF STARCH IS:

1/3 cup of cooked rice or pasta
1 oz. of a bread product (like 1 slice of bread)
1/2 cup of cooked grain, cereal or starchy vegetable
3/4 to 1 oz. of most snack foods

EACH SERVING ON THIS PAGE CONTAINS

15 grams
carbohydrates

0-3 grams
protein

0-1 grams
fat

80
calories

GRAINS/CEREALS/PASTA

Oats / Oatmeal, cooked	1/2 cup
Unsweetened, ready-to-eat cereals	3/4 cup
Granola (low-fat)	1/4 cup
Pasta, cooked	1/3 cup
Rice, cooked (white)	1/3 cup
Grits, cooked	1/2 cup

SNACKS

Crackers/Round, butter-type	6
Saltines	6
Graham cracker (2 1/2" square)	3
Pretzels	3/4 oz
Tortilla chips (regular)*	3/4 oz
Tortilla chips (fat-free or baked)	3/4 oz
Potato chips (regular)*	3/4 oz
Potato chips (fat-free or baked)	3/4 oz
Popcorn with butter*	3 cups
Popcorn, lower-fat, no fat added	3 cups
Sandwich crackers (cheese-filled)*	3 crackers
Sandwich crackers (w/ peanut butter)*	3 crackers

SERVING SIZE

BEANS, PEAS AND LENTILS

(Count as 1 Starch + 1 Lean Meat)

Beans have lots of healthy fiber and are an excellent choice for your health!

Beans, cooked	1/2 cup
Lentils, cooked	1/2 cup
Peas, cooked	1/2 cup
Baked Beans	1/3 cup



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

FRUITS

Choose whole fruit instead of juices whenever possible—fruit juices contain very little fiber. When using canned fruit, choose fruit packed in its own juice or light syrup.

IN GENERAL, A SINGLE SERVING OF FRUIT IS:

1/2 cup of canned or fresh fruit
1 small fresh fruit (4 oz.)
2 tablespoons of dried fruit
4 oz. unsweetened fruit juice

EACH SERVING ON THIS PAGE CONTAINS

15 grams
carbohydrates

0 grams
protein

0 grams
fat

60
calories

FRUITS

Apple, unpeeled (small, 4 oz)
Applesauce, unsweetened
Apricots, fresh
Apricots, dried
Banana (extra small, 4 oz.)
Blackberries, fresh
Blueberries, fresh
Cantaloupe (cubed)
Cherries (sweet, fresh, 3 oz.)
Dried fruit
(blueberries, cranberries, raisins)
Grapefruit (large, 11 oz.)
Grapes (small, 3 oz.)
Kiwi (3 1/2 oz.)
Mandarin oranges, canned
Orange (small 6 1/2 oz.)
Peach (fresh, medium, 6 oz)
Pear (fresh, large, 4 oz.)
Pineapple (fresh)
Plum (small)
Watermelon (13 1/2 oz.)

SERVING SIZE

1
1/2 cup
4 apricots
8 halves
1
3/4 cup
3/4 cup
1 cup
12
2 tbsp.
1/2
17
1
3/4 cup
1
1
1/2
3/4 cup
2
1 slice or
1 1/4 cup cubed

FRUIT JUICE

Apple, grapefruit, orange, pineapple
Fruit juice blends (100% juice)
Grape juice
Prune juice

SERVING SIZE

1/2 cup
1/3 cup
1/3 cup
1/3 cup





DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

MILK + YOGURT

Milk and yogurt are rich in calcium and protein—choose fat-free or low-fat versions (which have less saturated fat and cholesterol) for heart health. Plain or unsweetened yogurts are recommended.

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

12 grams	8 grams	0-3 grams	100
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

FAT-FREE (SKIM) OR
LOW-FAT / 1% MILK
AND YOGURT

Milk, buttermilk, Lactaid

Evaporated milk

Yogurt (plain or flavored with
a low-calorie sweetener)

SERVING SIZE

1 cup

1/2 cup

6 oz. 2/3 cup

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

12 grams	8 grams	8 grams	160
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

WHOLE MILK
AND YOGURT

Milk, Lactaid

Yogurt (plain) 6 oz.

SERVING SIZE

1 cup

3/4 cup

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

12 grams	8 grams	5 grams	120
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

LOW-FAT 2% MILK
AND YOGURT

Milk, Lactaid

Yogurt (plain) 6 oz.

1 cup

3/4 cup

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

15 grams	varies	varies	varies
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

NON-DAIRY MILK

Almond milk

Vanilla almond milk

Chocolate milk

Coconut milk

Soy milk

1 cup

1 cup

1/2 cup

1 cup

1 cup



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

SWEETS / DESSERTS

The foods on this list do not have as many vitamins, minerals and fiber as other foods. Choose foods from this list less often, especially if you are trying to lose weight.

IN GENERAL:

You can substitute food choices from this list for other carbohydrate-containing foods (such as those found on the Starch, Fruit, or Milk lists) in your meal plan. Count each serving as 1 carbohydrate unless otherwise noted.

— EACH SERVING ON THIS PAGE CONTAINS —

15 grams
carbohydrates

varies
protein

varies
fat

varies
calories

SWEETS / DESSERTS

SERVING SIZE

Brownie (small, unfrosted, about 1 oz.) (1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	1
Cake (frosted, 2-inch square)	1
Candy bar (chocolate/peanut) (1 1/2 carbohydrates + 1 1/2 fats)	2 “fun size” bars
Candy (hard)	3 pieces
Cookies (chocolate chip, 2 1/4 inch across) (1 carbohydrate + 2 fats)	2
Cookies (vanilla wafer) (1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	5
Doughnut (cake, plain, medium, about 1 1/2 oz) (1 1/2 carbohydrates + 2 fats)	1
Fruit juice bars (frozen, 100% juice, 3 oz)	1 bar
Gelatin, regular	1/2 cup
Granola snack bar (regular or low-fat) (1 1/2 carbohydrates)	1 oz bar
Hot chocolate, (regular, made w/ water) (1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	1 envelope
Ice cream (light or no sugar added) (1 carbohydrate + 1 fat)	1/2 cup
Ice cream (regular) (1 carbohydrate + 2 fats)	1/2 cup

Jam or jelly (regular)	1 tbsp
Muffin (4 oz) (1 carbohydrate + 1/2 fat)	1/4 muffin
Pie (8-inch, 2-crust, fruit) (3 carbohydrates + 2 fats)	1/6 pie
Pudding (regular, made w/ reduced-fat milk) (2 carbohydrates)	1/2 cup
Pudding (sugar-free or sugar- and fat-free, made w/ fat-free milk)	1/2 cup
Sports drink (8 oz)	1 cup
Sugar	1 tbsp
Syrup (light, pancake type)	2 tbsp
Syrup (regular, pancake type)	1 tbsp
Yogurt (frozen, fat-free)	1/3 cup



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

NONSTARCHY VEGETABLES

Try to eat at least 2-3 servings of nonstarchy vegetables each day—and choose a variety of vegetables to get different vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. If using canned vegetables, be sure to rinse well and choose no-salt-added versions when possible.

IN GENERAL, A SINGLE SERVING OF A NONSTARCHY VEGETABLE IS:

½ cup of cooked vegetables
1 cup of raw vegetables
½ cup of vegetable juice

— EACH SERVING ON THIS PAGE CONTAINS —

5 grams
carbohydrates

2 grams
protein

0 grams
fat

25
calories

NONSTARCHY VEGETABLES

Bean sprouts
Broccoli
Cabbage (green, bok choy, Chinese)
Carrots
Coleslaw mix
Cauliflower
Celery
Cucumber
Eggplant
Greens (collard, kale, mustard, turnip)
Green Beans
Jicama
Lettuce and other mixed greens
Mushrooms
Okra
Onions
Pea pods

Peppers (all varieties)
Radishes
Rutabagas
Sauerkraut
Spinach
Squash (summer, crookneck)
Tomatoes (fresh and canned)
Tomato sauce
Tomato/vegetable juice
Turnips
Zucchini



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

MEAT + OTHER PROTEIN

Whenever possible, choose lean meats. Keep red meat and processed meat to a minimum.

IN GENERAL:

Portion sizes on this list are based on cooked weight, after bone and fat have been removed. The carbohydrate content varies among plant-based proteins, so read food labels carefully. Remember that beans and lentils count as 1 Meat + 1 Starch.

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

0 grams	7 grams	0-3 grams	45
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

0 grams	7 grams	4-7 grams	75
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

LEAN MEAT

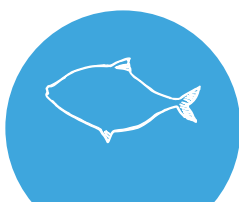
Beef (Select or Choice grades, fat trimmed): Ground round, rib roast, rump roast, pot roast, sirloin (lean), steak (cubed, flank, porterhouse, T-bone, tenderloin), chipped (dried)	1 oz.
Cheeses (reduced-fat or fat-free American, cheddar, feta, mozzarella, ricotta, Swiss, or any w/ 3 grams of fat or less per oz.)	1 oz.
Cottage cheese	1/4 cup
Egg whites	2
Fish (fresh or frozen, plain): catfish, cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, salmon, tilapia, trout, tuna)	Hot dog
(w/ 3 grams of fat or less per oz.)	1
Lamb loin, roast or chop, cooked	1 oz.
Pork (lean): rib or loin chop / roast, ham, tenderloin, Canadian bacon	1 oz.
Poultry (turkey, chicken, w/o skin)	1 oz.
Sandwich meats (w/ 3 grams of fat or less per oz.)	1 oz.
Tuna (canned in water or oil, drained)	1 oz.
Venison, roast	1 oz.

SERVING SIZE

MEDIUM FAT MEAT

Beef (corned beef, ground beef, prime rib)	1 oz.
Cheeses (w/ 4-6 grams of fat per oz)	
Mozzarella, reduced-fat cheeses (Monterey Jack, Swiss, Colby Jack), string cheese, feta	1 oz.
Egg	1
Fish, any type, fried	1 oz.
Meatloaf	1 oz.
Pork (cutlet, shoulder roast)	1 oz.
Poultry (with skin or fried)	1 oz.
Ricotta cheese (part-skim milk)	1/4 cup
Sausage (w/ 4-7 grams of fat /oz.)	1 oz.
Tempeh	3/4 cup
Tofu (4 oz.)	1/2 cup

SERVING SIZE



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

MEAT + OTHER PROTEIN

Whenever possible, choose lean meats. Keep red meat and processed meat to a minimum.

IN GENERAL:

Portion sizes on this list are based on cooked weight, after bone and fat have been removed. The carbohydrate content varies among plant-based proteins, so read food labels carefully. Remember that beans and lentils count as 1 Meat + 1 Starch.

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

0 grams	7 grams	8+ grams	100
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

EACH SERVING FROM THIS LIST CONTAINS

varies	7 grams	varies	varies
carbohydrates	protein	fat	calories

HIGH FAT MEAT

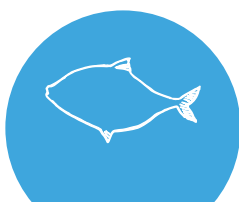
	SERVING SIZE
Bacon (pork)	2 slices
Bacon (turkey)	3 slices
Cheese (regular, American, blue, brie, cheddar, Monterey Jack, queso, Parmesan, hard goat, Swiss)	1 oz.
Hot dog (chicken, turkey, pork)	1
Nut butter (almond, cashew, peanut), plain	1 Tbsp
Pork sparerib	1 oz.
Processed sandwich meats (w/ 8 or more grams of fat)—bologna, pastrami, hard salami,	1 oz.
Sausage (w/ 8 or more grams of fat per oz)—Bratwurst, chorizo, Italian, knockwurst, Polish, smoked, summer)	1 oz

SERVING SIZE

PLANT-BASED

	SERVING SIZE
Almond, cashew, peanut butter, plain	1 Tbsp
Beans, lentils, peas (cooked) (1 starch + 1 lean meat)	1/2 cup
Edamame	1/2 cup
Hummus	
(1 carbohydrate + 1 high-fat meat)	1/3 cup
Tempeh	3/4 cup
Tofu (4 oz.)	1/2 cup

SERVING SIZE



DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT

FATS

Choose heart-healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats most often.

IN GENERAL, A SINGLE SERVING OF STARCH IS:

1 teaspoon of regular margarine, vegetable oil, or butter
1 tablespoon of regular salad dressing

EACH SERVING ON THIS PAGE CONTAINS

0 grams
carbohydrates

0 grams
protein

5 grams
fat

45
calories

MONOUNSATURATED FATS

	SERVING SIZE
Avocado (medium, 1 oz.)	2 tbsp
Nut butters (trans-fat free)	1 ½ tsp
Almonds, cashews	6
Macadamia	3
Peanuts	10
Pecans	4 halves
Walnuts	4 halves
Oil (canola, olive, peanut)	1 tsp
Olives (black, ripe)	8 large
Olives (green, stuffed)	10 large

POLYUNSATURATED FATS

Margarine (lower-fat spread)	1 tbsp
Margarine (stick, tub, or squeeze)	1 tsp
Mayonnaise (reduced-fat)	1 tbsp
Mayonnaise (regular)	1 tsp
Oil (corn, cottonseed, flaxseed, grapeseed, safflower, sunflower)	1 tsp
Salad dressing (reduced fat)	2 tbsp
Salad dressing (regular)	1 tbsp

SATURATED FATS

	SERVING SIZE
Bacon (cooked, regular, turkey)	1 slice
Butter	1 tsp
Cream (half and half)	2 tbsp
Cream cheese (reduced-fat)	1 ½ tbsp
Cream cheese (regular)	1 tbsp
Sour cream (reduced-fat)	3 tbsp
Sour cream (regular)	2 tbsp





DIABETES: WHAT TO EAT FREE FOODS

Eat up to 3 servings per day of the free foods in the serving size listed without counting any carbs.

IN GENERAL:

Choices listed without a serving size can be eaten whenever you like. For better blood glucose control, spread your servings of these foods over the day.

EACH SERVING ON THIS PAGE CONTAINS

0-5 grams
carbohydrates

0 grams
protein

0 grams
fat

>20
calories

FREE FOODS

Cabbage (raw)
Gelatin (sugar-free or unflavored)
Gum
Jam or jelly (light or no sugar added)
Salad greens
Sugar substitutes
(low-calorie sweeteners)
Cream cheese (fat free)

SERVING SIZE

1/2 cup
free
free
2 tsp
free
free
free
1 tbsp

CONDIMENTS

Barbecue sauce
Ketchup (catsup)
Mustard
Pickles (medium size dill)
Salsa
Taco sauce
Vinegar

2 tsp
1 tbsp
free
1 1/2
1/4 cup
1 tbsp
free

DRINKS / MIXES

Bouillon, broth, consommé
Carbonated or mineral, club soda
Coffee or tea (unsweetened)
Diet soft drinks or
sugar-free drink mixes

SERVING SIZE

free
free
free
free
free

SEASONINGS

Flavoring extracts
Garlic
Herbs (fresh or dried)
Nonstick cooking sprays
Spices
Worcestershire sauce

free
free
free
free
free
free

