

# EATING HEALTHY DIABETES

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## Eating Healthy Diabetes

### Eating healthy with diabetes

Higher-than-normal blood glucose (sugar) levels may cause serious health problems. What you eat and how much you eat can help you keep your blood glucose levels in goal range.

The foods that have the biggest effect on your blood glucose levels are carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are digested by the body to form glucose or sugar, which the body uses for energy. For the best blood sugar control, eat small, consistent amounts of carbohydrates, spaced evenly throughout the day.

### What are carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates are found in three main food groups: starches, fruit, and dairy products. Carbohydrates are also found in snack foods, sugary foods, and sugar-sweetened drinks.

### How do you keep blood glucose in target range?

According to the UAE Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes, target blood glucose ranges for diabetes are:

- 80-130 mg/DL
- Less than 180 mg/DL two hours after starting a meal

### Step 1: Timing

Eat within the first hour or two of waking. Do not go more than 4 - 5 hours without eating during the day. Avoid skipping meals and try to follow the same meal schedule on weekends as well as weekdays. Space all meals and snacks at least two hours apart. Try a schedule like this:

|          |           |    |         |           |
|----------|-----------|----|---------|-----------|
| 6:45 am  | Wake Up   |    | 6:45 am | Wake Up   |
| 7:30 am  | Breakfast |    | 7:30 am | Breakfast |
| Noon     | Lunch     | OR | Noon    | Lunch     |
| 3:00 pm  | Snack     |    | 5:00 pm | Dinner    |
| 7:00 p m | Dinner    |    | 8:30 pm | Snack     |

## Step 2: Consistency

Eat the same amount of carbohydrate in each meal and snack.

\_\_\_\_\_ Meals per day, each containing \_\_\_\_\_ servings of carbohydrates (\_\_\_\_\_ grams)

\_\_\_\_\_ Snacks per day, each containing \_\_\_\_\_ servings of carbohydrates (\_\_\_\_\_ grams)

## Step 3: Variety

Eat a variety of foods every day. Include a mixture of carbohydrates, non-starchy vegetables, lean protein, and nutritious fats to get the nutrients you need while staying within your goal of target blood glucose levels.

### What is considered one serving of carbohydrates?

**The Golden Rule:** One serving of carbohydrates = 15 grams carbohydrates

**Starches:** Choose 4 - 6 servings daily. Choose whole grain, high-fiber foods most often.

**Remember:** There are few or no carbohydrates in the following:

1 serving = ½ cup hot cereal; ¾ cup cold dry unsweetened cereal; 1/3 cup rice or pasta; 1 slice of bread; 4- 6 crackers; 1 waffle or pancake (size of a CD); 1 small baked potato; ½ cup of mashed potato, corn, peas, or beans; 3 cups of popped popcorn; ½ hamburger bun, hot dog bun, or English muffin; 1 cup soup; ½ of a small bagel or tortilla shell.

**Meat and meat substitutes:** Choose 2-3 servings daily.

1 serving = 3 ounces of cooked meat/poultry/ fish (size of a deck of cards); 1 egg, 2 egg whites; ¼ cup egg beaters; ¼ cup low-fat cottage cheese; 1 tablespoon peanut butter.

**Fruit:** Choose 2-3 fruits daily. Fresh, frozen, or canned (packed in 100% juice, not light or heavy syrup or “no sugar added” varieties).

1 serving = 1 small fruit (113g or 4 ounces); ½ cup unsweetened canned fruit; 17 grapes;

2 tbsp raisins; 1 cup cubed melon;

¼ cup dried fruit; ½ cup 100% fruit juice.

**Milk and yogurt:** Choose 2 - 3 servings daily. Pick low-fat or fat-free versions most often.

1 serving = 1 cup of skim or 1% milk;

170g or 6 ounces low-fat yogurt; ½ cup low-fat or sugar-free ice cream; ½ cup sugar-free pudding.

**Sweets and sugary foods:** Choose less often.

1 serving = 1 tablespoon regular jelly, jam, or syrup; 5cm (2 inch) square of cake; ½ cup regular ice cream; ½ glazed donut; 1/3 cup sherbet; 2 small cookies; ½ small frosted cupcake; ½ cup soda.

**Non-starchy vegetables:** Choose at least 3 - 5 servings daily.

1 serving = 1 cup raw vegetables or ½ cup cooked vegetables, such as green beans, broccoli, carrots, celery, cucumber, lettuce and other dark leafy greens; mushrooms; okra; onions; pea pods; peppers; tomatoes; beets; zucchini, etc.

**Fats:** Choose 2 - 3 servings daily.

Read labels and choose foods that are labeled trans-fat free and do not contain hydrogenated oils in the ingredients list.

1 serving = 1 teaspoon butter, margarine, oil, or mayonnaise; 1 tablespoon salad dressing; nuts; seeds; reduced-fat mayonnaise or cream cheese; tbs reduced-fat salad dressing or sour cream. (Tip of thumb is a teaspoon; whole thumb is a tablespoon.)

### Use the healthy plate method

This will balance meals and control portion sizes, leading to gradual weight loss and better control of blood sugar levels.

**Fruit:** One small fresh fruit or half-cup unsweetened canned fruit or unsweetened juice.

**Dairy:** Milk, yogurt (plain, unsweetened, or light).

**Non-starchy vegetables:** Lettuce, broccoli, dark leafy greens, carrots, celery, green beans, cucumber, cabbage, mushrooms, okra, onions, pea pods, peppers, tomatoes, beets, zucchini, beets, eggplant, etc.

**Carbohydrates:** Pasta, rice, bread, crackers, cereal, potatoes, peas, lentils, dried bean/ legumes, corn, sweet potatoes, winter squash.

**Protein:** Lean meat, skinless poultry, fish, eggs, low-fat cottage or ricotta cheese, tofu, low-fat cheese, peanut butter or reduced fat peanut butter.

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