

Diet for Diabetes

There is no mystery about healthy eating for diabetics. Follow these rules to keep your blood sugar under good control.

General Rules

- **Get to and stay at your best weight.**

Ask your doctor what your weight goal should be.

- **Avoid foods high sugar**

High sugar foods raise blood sugar fast.

cookies	candy	regular soda
jelly	cake	donuts
honey	ice cream	sugared cereals
table sugar	molasses	pie

- **Use artificial sugars to sweeten foods**

- **Spot hidden sugars**

Foods ending in -ose like fructose, maltose, lactose are kinds of sugar and have calories. Avoid these foods. “Natural”, “raw”, brown sugar, honey, and molasses are forms of sugar. Sorbitol and manitol also have calories and will raise your blood sugar.

- **Eat meals and snacks at the same time each day**

- **Eat food from the six food groups everyday**

The six food groups are:

starch/bread	vegetables
meat/protein	fruit
milk	fats

- **Eat foods high in fiber**

Foods high in fiber help to slow the rise in blood sugar after eating simple sugars.

peas	whole grain breads	beans
corn	strawberries	grits
lentils	bran cereals	apples
prunes	oat bran	popcorn

- **Avoid foods high in fat**

Foods high in fat are also high in calories.

bacon	butter
lunch meat	fried foods
hotdogs	mayonnaise
cheese	muffins
whole milk	nuts
	waffles

- **Limit alcohol**

Alcoholic drinks may lower your blood sugar - too much

- **Avoid fad diets**

very low calorie or limited kinds of food

- **Weigh and measure foods**

Use a standard measuring cup, tablespoon, teaspoon, and food scale.

Common Measurements

1 tablespoon = 3 teaspoons

1 cup = 8 liquid ounces

1/2 cup = 4 liquid ounces

1/4 cup = 2 liquid ounces

- **Read labels wisely**

low cholesterol does not mean low fat

- **Avoid “dietetic” and “diabetic” foods**

“Dietetic” and “diabetic” foods may be high in calories. No food should be eaten in unlimited amounts. Foods labeled “sugar free” or “fat free” may have caloric sweeteners such as corn syrup solids. These foods may raise your blood sugar.

Diet for Diabetes (continued)

Meal Planning and the Exchange System

Your diet will not be difficult. Your doctor and dietitian will teach you how many servings you need from each group every day.

You do not need special foods. You will eat foods from the six food groups. All the foods in the same group have the same amount of carbohydrate, protein, and fat. You can trade or **exchange** one food for any other in the same group.

The Six Food Groups

Starch/Bread Group

1 serving in the starch/bread group equals:

1/2 cup cereal

grain

pasta or beans

1 slice bread or 1 ounce of bread

1 serving contains 80 calories

Foods in the starch/bread group include:

cereal	breads
rice	dried beans
pasta	peas

These starch/bread foods are high in fiber:

bran cereals	oatmeal
rye bread	black eyed peas
corn	lima beans

Some starch/bread foods contain extra fat calories. These foods are counted as one starch and one fat.

Examples are:

- biscuits
- waffles
- pancakes
- corn bread
- butter crackers, like Ritz

Fruit Group

Fruit does contain sugar. Fruit raises your blood sugar levels. Eat fruit with your meals. If you have a snack of fruit, also have a starch.

1 serving in the fruit group equals:

1 small piece of fruit

1/2 cup fresh fruit or juice

1/4 cup dried fruit

1 serving contains 60 calories

The fruit group includes:

grapefruit, 1/2	apricots
oranges	raisins, 2 Tbs.
apples	prunes
grapes	pineapples
pears	plums
blueberries	banana, 1/2

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Meat/Protein Group

Meat, fish, turkey, chicken, eggs, cheese and nuts provide protein. Some protein sources are better than others. **Low fat protein is best.** Meats may be high in fat and cholesterol. Limit eggs and red meat to not more than 3 times a week.

**1 serving in the meat/protein group equals
1 ounce of protein**

1 Serving of very lean meat /protein contains 35 calories

Some very lean meat/protein foods are:
chicken or turkey (white meat, skinless)
2 egg whites or egg substitutes 1/2 cup
tuna packed in water
beans, peas, lentils cooked 1/2 cup
1 oz fat free cheese

1 Serving of low fat protein contains 55 calories

Some low fat protein foods are:

lean beef	fresh ham
veal	skinless chicken or turkey
fresh or frozen fish	tuna (canned in water)
cottage cheese	diet cheese
egg whites	egg substitutes

1 Serving of medium fat protein contains 75 calories

Some medium fat protein foods are:

beef roasts	steaks
meatloaf	pork
lamb	veal cutlet
tuna (canned in oil)	eggs
liver	kidney
sweetbreads	
ricotta and mozzarella cheeses	

1 Serving of high fat protein contains 100 calories

Some high fat protein foods are:

prime rib of beef	corned beef
ribs, sausage	fried fish
regular cheese	lunch meat
peanut butter 2 Tbs	pork sausage

Hot dogs are equal to 1 high fat meat and 1 fat.

Cooking Tips:

- bake, broil or boil—don't fry
- do not add mixes or fats to foods - avoid products like "Shake 'N Bake" and "Hamburger Helper." They can add extra salt and calories.
- weigh meat after it is trimmed and cooked

Vegetables

Vegetables provide fiber. They have no cholesterol or saturated fat. Vegetables give many of the vitamins and minerals we need. Choose fresh or frozen vegetables. Have several servings each day.

1 serving in the vegetable group equals
1/2 cup cooked
1 cup raw
1/2 cup juice

1 serving of vegetables contains 25 calories

Some foods in the vegetable group are:

asparagus	green peppers
beets	mushrooms
broccoli	onions
cabbage	spinach
carrots	tomato
eggplant	turnips
green beans	zucchini

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Milk Group

Milk is important in your diet. Milk provides the body with calcium. Calcium is needed for strong bones. **Skim milk and skim milk products are best.** Whole milk is high in cholesterol and saturated fat. Avoid whole milk products and powdered coffee creamers. These are high in fat.

**1 Serving in the milk group equals
1 cup or 8 ounces**

**1 Serving of skim milk products contains
90 calories**

Some foods in this group are:

evaporated skim milk, 1/2 cup	1% fat milk
plain non-fat yogurt	skim milk
dry non-fat milk, 1/3 cup	lowfat buttermilk

**1 Serving of low fat milk products contains
120 calories**

Some foods in this group are:

2% fat milk
plain lowfat yogurt
Light yogurt
(with added non-fat milk solids)

**1 Serving of whole milk products contains
150 calories**

Some foods in this group are:

whole milk
evaporated whole milk, 1/2 cup
whole plain yogurt

Fat Group

1 serving contains 45 calories

There are many different foods in the fat group. These foods should be eaten in small amounts. They are high in calories. There are several kinds of fat, **saturated** and **unsaturated**. unsaturated fat has two categories, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated.

- All fats in the serving sizes listed contain the same number of calories but monounsaturated fats are better because they do not increase the risk for heart disease.
- Anyone trying to lose weight will want to limit the amount of high fat foods included in the diet each day.

Monounsaturated

Some foods that contain monounsaturated fats are:

Canola, olive and peanut oil, 1 tsp.	almonds, 6 nuts
Olives, green, 10 large	cashews, 6 nuts
Peanut butter, 2 tsp.	peanuts, 10 nuts

Polyunsaturated fats come from plants and do not have cholesterol. These fats are liquid at room temperature.

Some foods that contain polyunsaturated fats:

Oil, 1 tsp. corn, safflower	Walnuts, 2 whole
Salad dressing regular, 1 Tbs.	Margarine, 1 tsp
Diet salad dressing, 2 Tbs.	Mayonnaise, 1 tsp.

Saturated fats come from animals and are high in cholesterol. Palm and coconut oil are also saturated. Saturated fats are solid at room temperature. Limit saturated fats in the diet.

Foods that contain saturated fats are:

bacon, 1 slice	butter, 1 tsp.
chitterlings, 1/2 oz.	cream, 2 Tbsp
cream cheese, 1 Tbs	salt pork, 1/4 oz.
palm and coconut oil	sour cream, 2 Tbsp
coffee whitener powder, 4 tsp.	palm and coconut oil
reduced fat cream cheese, 2 Tbs.	

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Free Foods

There are some foods that contain very few calories, less than 20 calories per serving. You can eat them throughout the day. These foods may keep you from feeling hungry.

Examples are:

coffee/tea	lime
club soda	pepper
sugar free sodas	catsup
diet tonic water	mustard
unsweetened cocoa powder	vinegar
celery	spices
radishes	cinnamon
cucumbers	garlic powder
cabbage	flavoring extracts
hot peppers	non-stick sprays
zucchini	sugar-free gum
spinach	sugar-free hard candy
salad greens	sugar-free gelatin
pickles	
lemon	

Special Treats

If your blood sugar is under good control, you can have a treat once or twice a week. The following foods contain sugar and fat and should be eaten in small portions:

angel food cake, 1 small slice	2 starches
vanilla wafers, 6 small	1 starch/1 fat
ice cream, 1/2 cup	2 starches/2 fats
sherbert, 1/4 cup	1 starch
chips, 1 ounce	1 starch/2 fats
frozen fruit yogurt: 1/3 cup	1 starch

Substitute the treats for these exchanges in your meal plan. That way you will still only get the calories you need.

Check with your doctor or dietitian about other treats you would like to fit into your meal plan.

Combination Foods

Many foods do not fit under one food group. These are combination foods. They contain foods from more than one group. Ask your dietitian or diabetes educator about your favorite combination foods. Some good information and recipes for combination foods are found in the American Diabetes Association cookbooks. Examples of combination foods:

cheese pizza, 1/4 of 10" pie	2 starches	
thin crust	2 medium fat meat 1 fat	
chili with beans	1 cup	2 starches 2 medium fat meats
macaroni and cheese	1 cup	2 starches 2 medium fat meat
soup, vegetable	1 cup	1 starch