

Nutrition Know-How

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. For most people with diabetes, a healthy, nutritious diet consists of 40% to 60% of calories from carbohydrates, 20% from protein, and 30% or less from fat. Follow a balanced eating plan 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. And 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.

The amount listed is for the serving size shown.

Are you eating more, less, or the same?

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

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.

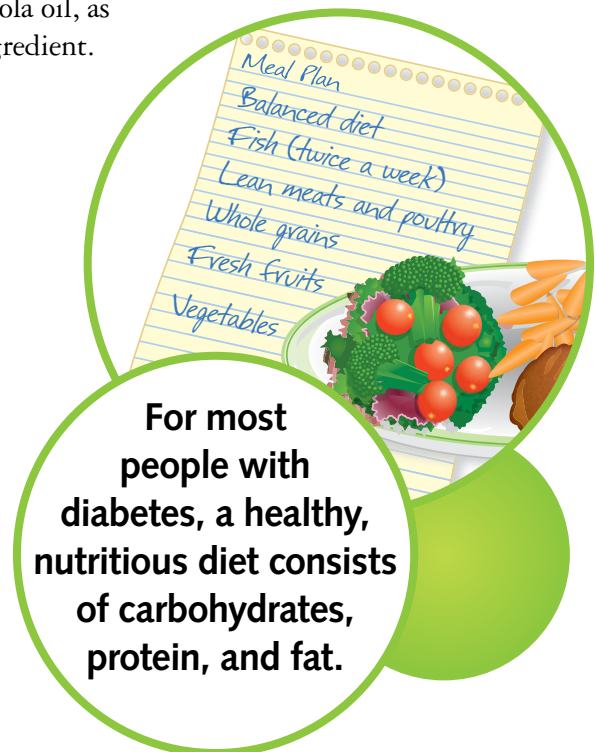
Protein comes from meat, chicken, fish, dairy products (such as cheese, milk, and yogurt), beans, and some vegetables. In following a nutritious diet, try to eat more chicken and fish than red meat, and trim extra fat off all meat. Also choose nonfat or reduced-fat dairy products.

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.



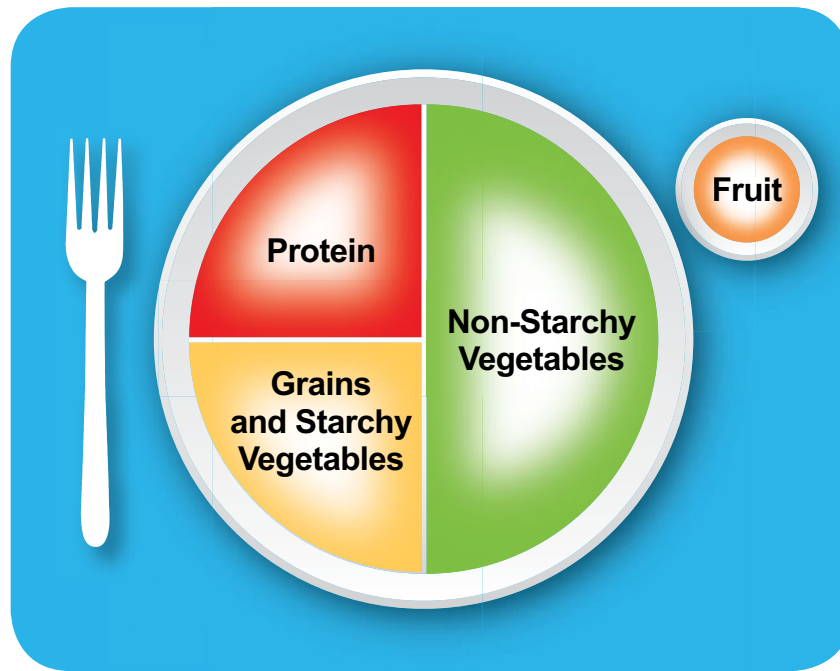
For most people with diabetes, a healthy, nutritious diet consists of carbohydrates, protein, and fat.

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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 “Create Your Plate,” may help you make sure that you are eating a variety of nutritious foods at each meal for better diabetes management.



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.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/planning-meals/create-your-plate. On this Web site, you'll learn to make smart nutritional choices from every food group.

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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
- Apricot
- Banana
- Blueberries
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Kiwi
- Mango
- Orange
- Peach
- Pear
- Plum
- Raspberries
- Strawberries
- 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.

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Eat the Rainbow

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

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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.



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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.

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The amount of carbs in a food or drink is listed on the Nutrition Facts table that is found on all packaged foods and drinks.



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Lose Weight for a Healthier You

You can see it every day: many Americans are overweight. 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 manage diabetes better 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 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 may help you lead a healthier life and better control your diabetes.



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

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.

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