

Eating Healthy with Diabetes



**BlueCross
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Making good food choices

Eating well with diabetes does not have to be complicated. In general, choose minimally processed foods (lean protein, non-starchy vegetables, healthy fats and whole grains) at each meal.

Proteins



1 serving=approximately 2–5 ounces. Non-breaded meats do not contain carbohydrates and therefore do not raise blood sugar levels. Please note that beans and soy products may contain some carbohydrates. (There is approximately 15 grams of carbohydrate in ½ cup of beans and 5–15 grams in soy-based products.)

Chicken
Fish and seafood
Cheese
Eggs
Turkey
Beef
Pork
Veal
Lentils

Beans (black, kidney and pinto)
Peas (black-eyed or split peas)
Edamame
Soy nuts
Nut butters (almond, cashew)
Hummus

Non-starchy vegetables



1 serving=½ cup of cooked vegetables or 1 cup of raw vegetables. Try to eat at least 3–5 servings of vegetables a day. Best choices are fresh or frozen vegetables.

Broccoli
Spinach
Kale
Artichokes
Asparagus
Celery
Cucumbers
Green beans
Mushrooms

Onions
Okra
Zucchini
Cabbage
Cauliflower
Peppers
Carrots
Eggplant
Tomatoes

Healthy fats



Try to eat monounsaturated and polyunsaturated healthy fats (listed below). Eat less than 20 grams of saturated fats (lard, butter, cream sauces, chocolate and high-fat meats) per day. Avoid trans fats (cookies, cakes, doughnuts, margarines and shortening) as much as possible.

Avocados	Almond butter
Olives	Walnuts
Peanut butter	Olive oil
Almonds	Sesame oil
Cashews	Soy milk
Pecans	Tofu
Peanuts	Flaxseed
Sesame seeds	Pumpkin seeds
Cashew butter	Sunflower seeds

Whole grains



For most grains, ½ cup or 1 ounce contains 15 grams of carbohydrate. If you choose to eat grains, be sure to pick whole grains. For cereals, breads and crackers, choose products that have whole grain as the first ingredient. Stay away from “refined” flours such as white and enriched flour-based products.

Whole oats/oatmeal	Brown rice
Whole wheat flour	Whole rye
Bulgur	Wild rice
Popcorn	Quinoa



Starchy vegetables



If you choose to eat a starchy vegetable, choose healthier options (listed below). Limit your portion to ¾ to 1 cup. For most starches, ½ cup or 1 ounce contains 15 grams of carbohydrate. Stay away from white flour-based products and ones with added sugar.

Parsnips	Green peas
Plantains	Corn
Butternut squash	Sweet potatoes
Acorn squash	

Dairy



Dairy sources are an excellent way to get your recommended calcium and high-quality protein.

1 serving=1 cup of 1% milk or 6 ounces of yogurt or 1 ounce of low-fat cheese. Each serving has about 12 grams of carbohydrates.

Low-fat milk
Low-fat cheese
Plain, reduced-fat yogurt (regular or greek)
Unflavored fortified soy milk

Fruit



Fruits are loaded with vitamins, minerals and fiber.

1 serving=1 small piece of whole fruit, ½ cup of frozen fruit, ¾ to 1 cup of fresh berries or 2 tablespoons of dried fruit. Each serving contains about 15 grams of carbohydrate.

Apples	Apricots
Blueberries	Bananas
Raspberries	Dried fruit (raisins, cherries)
Blackberries	Fruit cocktail in fruit juice (not heavy syrup)
Strawberries	
Avocados	
Plums	
Peaches	

Beverages



Choose zero-calorie drinks. Avoid sugary drinks such as soda, fruit punch, fruit drinks, energy drinks and sweet tea. If you choose to drink juice, be sure the label says 100% juice with no sugar added. Limit diet soda if possible.

Water
Coffee

Unsweetened teas
Club soda

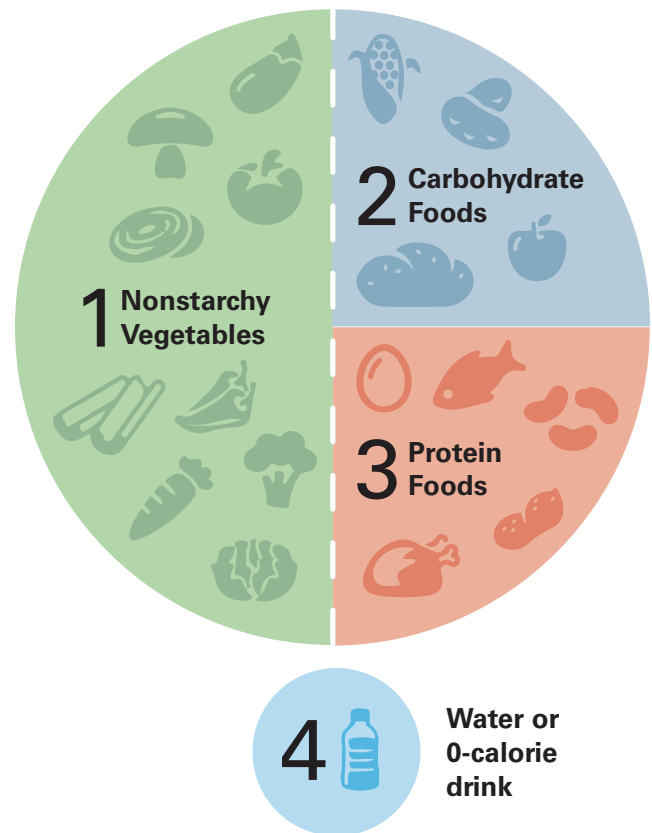
When eating out at restaurants:

- Look at the portion size
- When ordering a salad, ask for dressing on the side
- Order foods that are not breaded or fried
- Ask the waiter not to bring bread to the table if it doesn't fit into your meal plan
- Ask to substitute broccoli or salad for French fries
- Try to eat the same portion as you would at home—divide your plate in half and put half of your food in a container to go as soon as your meal arrives



The Plate Method

The Plate Method is a simple and effective way to manage your blood glucose levels and lose weight. With this method, you fill your plate with more non-starchy veggies and smaller portions of carbohydrates and protein—no special tools or counting required!



Six simple steps to create your plate

1. Using your dinner plate, put a line down the middle of the plate. Then on one side, cut it again so you will have three sections on your plate.
2. Fill the largest section with non-starchy vegetables. See the list of non-starchy vegetables.
3. Now in one of the small sections, put carbohydrate foods such as grains, starchy vegetables, fruits or dairy. See the list of grains, starchy vegetables, fruits and dairy.

4. In the other small section, put protein. See the list of proteins.
5. Choose healthy fats in small amounts. For cooking, use healthy oils. For salads, some healthy additions are nuts, seeds, avocado and vinaigrettes.
6. To complete your meal, add a low-calorie drink like water, unsweetened tea or coffee.

Planning meals

The Plate Method meal suggestions:

Breakfast

- Use ½ of the plate for protein and veggies such as an omelet with spinach and peppers
- Use ¼ of the plate carbohydrate foods such as a piece of whole wheat toast or whole fruit such as an apple or avocado
- Finish with a glass of water, unsweetened tea or coffee

Lunch and dinner

- Use ¼ of the plate for protein such as fish (wild-caught salmon, trout, halibut, sea bass or cod) or grilled (or roasted), skinless chicken breast
- Use ¼ of the plate for a starchy food such as a small boiled sweet potato
- Fill the remaining ½ of the plate with vegetables such as broccoli, kale, asparagus or green beans
- Have 1 serving of fruit (such as fresh blueberries or raspberries) for dessert
- Enjoy with a glass of low-fat milk or water

Snacks—choose one of the following:

- Handful of almonds (23 pieces)
- Fresh-cut veggies with 1/3 cup hummus



- Apple with 1 tablespoon of cashew butter
- ¼ cup cottage cheese and a piece of fresh fruit
- 1 medium banana and 1 tablespoon of peanut butter
- ¼ of a whole avocado
- 1 cup of salad greens with ½ cup diced cucumber and drizzle of olive oil and vinegar

Portion size guidelines:

Proteins

3 ounces of cooked meat, fish or poultry: approximately the size of your palm or the size of a deck of cards

3 ounces of grilled/baked fish: approximately the size of a dollar bill

Non-starchy vegetables

1 cup of green salad: approximately the size of a baseball or your fist

1 cup of cooked broccoli: approximately the size of a baseball

Healthy fats

1 tablespoon of nut butter or salad dressing: approximately the size of the tip of your thumb

1 teaspoon of peanut butter: approximately the size of your fingertip

1 ounce of almonds: approximately a handful or 23 almonds

1 tablespoon of olives: approximately the size of a poker chip (about 5 medium olives)



Whole grains

½ cup of cooked brown rice or pasta:
approximately the size of a tennis ball

1 slice of whole wheat bread: approximately
the size of a deck of cards. Remember, a serving
of bread is ONE slice, therefore a sandwich is 2
servings of whole grains/carbs.

Starchy vegetables

1 sweet potato: approximately the size of a
computer mouse

Fruit

1 medium-sized apple: approximately the
size of a baseball

½ cup blueberries: approximately the size
of a light bulb

1 ounce dried fruit: approximately the size
of a golf ball

1 cup of strawberries (12 berries): approximately
the size of a baseball

Understanding food labels

Food labels can be an essential tool for diabetes meal planning. Here's what to look for when comparing food labels:

- Pay attention to serving sizes
- Look for heart-healthy ingredients such as whole grains, soy and oats
- Avoid unhealthy ingredients such as hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil
- When looking at ingredients, the main ingredient is listed first followed by other ingredients used in decreasing amounts
- Look at the total carbohydrates, not just sugar
- Don't miss out on high-fiber foods
- "Sugar-free" does not mean carbohydrate-free
- "Fat-free" can still have carbohydrates
- Choose healthier fats such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats
- Avoid unhealthy fats such as trans fats



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