

Eat right!



Eating right is the most important way to control your blood sugar. Your blood sugar is affected by what you eat, when you eat, and how much you eat.

The good news is that you don't have to go hungry, buy special foods, or give up all your favorite foods.

Two things you must do:

1. **Eat smaller servings.** (see **Portion Size sheet for further info**)
2. **Eat fewer carbohydrates like sweets and starches.**

What's in it for you?

Better blood sugar control and fewer health problems. Eating the right portion sizes may help you lose weight.

Most people with diabetes are overweight. Even a loss of a few pounds can make you feel better and may bring your blood sugars under better control.

Watch your portion sizes.

Many people do not realize that the portion sizes they now eat are too big. One of the most important ways to control your blood sugar is to eat the right portion sizes. See the page on portion control.

Don't skip meals!

It's bad for your blood sugar levels, may make you overeat at your next meal, and it won't help you lose weight.

Still hungry?

One way to feel full with smaller portions is to **eat slowly**. Take at least 20 minutes to eat each meal.

- **Eat more vegetables.** Vegetables such as tomatoes, summer squash, carrots and salad help fill you up without a lot of extra calories or carbohydrates. They also give a lot of healthy vitamins your body needs.
- **Drink more water.** Drink a glass before you eat. Take a sip between each bite.
- **Taste each bite of your food.** Your meal will be more enjoyable.
- **Wait a few minutes** before getting a second helping. You may find you're no longer hungry.

A healthy habit...try taking a walk after meals!

The healthy plate



Think of your plate as 3 different sections: one section for vegetables, one for protein, and one for carbohydrates (carbs).

Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ of your plate with the vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ with the protein and $\frac{1}{4}$ with the carbohydrates.

Carbohydrates (Carbs)

All carbohydrates make your blood sugar go up, but we need carbohydrates to live. The good news is that you don't have to cut carbs out. Eating the right portion size and getting rid of the "extra carbohydrates", like sweets, desserts and that extra slice of bread often does the trick. Be careful not to eat too many carbs at one meal or snack! Pasta, potatoes, rice, beans, tortillas, fruits, fruit juices and milk all may affect your blood sugar by adding too much.

Desserts have carbs

Desserts have a lot of carbs. Ask your doctor if you can have a little bit of dessert.

What is a small dessert portion?

- 1 small scoop of ice cream (1/2 cup)
- 1 snack size (mini) candy bar
- 1 small piece of cake

Regular drinks may have too many carbs.

Many drinks are high in carbs. Juices, fruit drinks, sodas, and even milk make your blood sugar go up.

What are your best drinks?

- **Water!!**
- Tea or coffee (with sugar substitutes if you want)
- Low fat or skim milk
- Diet sodas or sugar-free drink

Alcoholic drinks can make it hard for you to control your blood sugar. If you drink alcohol, don't have more than 2 drinks a day.

Proteins

Proteins include meat, fish, chicken and tofu. Proteins are good for your body. They keep blood sugar even and keep you from getting hungry between meals. Eating well also means eating the right portions of proteins.

Vegetables

The good news is most vegetables are low in carbs so you can eat as many as you want.

Try these:

Broccoli	Cucumbers
Cabbage	Jicama
Spinach	Mushrooms
Green salad	Tomatoes
Carrots	Peppers
Celery	Zucchini

Watch out! These vegetables are starchy and are high in carbs! Keep the portion sizes small.

Potatoes	Sweet potatoes
Corn	French fries
Peas	

Be active



What's in it for you?

- Being more active is one of the best things you can do to control your blood sugar.
- Moving more can help you lose weight, have more energy, and feel more upbeat.

Start smart!

If you are not exercising, start with 10 minutes a day. It can be as simple as walking 5 minutes from your door, turning around and walking back.

You might be surprised that some of the activities you can do everyday are exercise:

- Housework like sweeping, vacuuming, dusting
- Climbing stairs
- Mowing the lawn or working in your garden
- Walking to the bus

No matter how old you are, being active is good for you!

Some people exercise by:

- Using a stationary bicycle
- Walking in the mall
- Enrolling in water aerobics
- Going to an exercise class

A lot of people say that walking is the easiest exercise for them. Many people walk with a friend or their pet. Walking is free, easy, and fun.

So turn off the TV, get up and get moving!

Helpful tips if you have trouble walking:

You can stretch, lift weights or do yoga while sitting in a chair. Look for videos or books at your library to help you get started.

Stretch bands and wrist or ankle cuffs with weights can help build muscle strength. You can buy them at sports or discount stores.

Community pools often have special water exercise classes. Call your local parks and recreation department.

Take your medications



Most people with diabetes need to take one or more medications to keep their blood sugar normal.

You may also need medications for other health problems like high cholesterol or high blood pressure. It can be hard to keep track of so many medications. This guide will help you.

Remember,

- It is OK to ask your family or friends for help.
- Get refills early.
- Never change or skip a dose unless you speak with your doctor.
- Keep your medicines where you will see them and remember to take them.

Taking your medications safely will help you feel better.

Remember to take your medications every day. A pill case can help. Take the medicines exactly the way your doctor prescribes. If you have any questions, ask your doctor.

Don't skip meals or your medication may make your blood sugar go too low.

Don't stop taking your medications unless your doctor tells you to. Call your doctor if your medications:

- Don't have refills
- Make you feel sick
- Are too expensive
- Make your blood sugar too low

Take your medicine bottles to every doctor's visit, that way you and your doctor can keep better track of your medicines.

Adapted with permission from the American College of Physicians: "Living with Diabetes"

How is your mood?



Depression and anxiety are pretty common for people with diabetes and other long term health problems. Do not ignore feeling bad, sad or stressed. Be sure to talk with your doctor or nurse if you have these feelings.

Depression

- Sad, anxious or empty moods that do not go away
- Feeling guilty, worthless, hopeless or helpless
- Loss of interest or pleasure in sex or in hobbies and activities
- Lack of energy; being “slowed down”
- Having a hard time making decisions
- Memory problems
- Trouble sleeping, or sleeping too much; waking up too early
- Eating too much or too little
- Thoughts of death or suicide or suicide attempts

Call your doctor if you have 5 or more from the list above, or if any of these symptoms last at least 2 weeks.

Anxiety

Fear and anxiety are part of life. You may feel anxious before you take a test or walk down a dark street. This kind of anxiety is useful - it can make you more careful. It usually ends soon after you are out of the situation that caused it. For many people, the feeling does not go away. The feeling may even get worse over time. Some people are too anxious to even leave home.

Talk with your doctor if you have some of these feelings and they do not go away:

- An unrealistic view of problems
- Feeling restless, tense, “edgy” or irritable
- Frequent headaches, sweating, nausea, trembling, easily startled
- Trouble falling or staying asleep, tiredness
- Frequent need to use the bathroom
- Chest pains or frequent nightmares.

(This information about anxiety is from Medline plus. Please see <http://medlineplus.gov/> for more information on this and other health topics).

Portion Control

Why think about portions?

In today's world, it is easy to lose sight of what a healthy portion of food should be. Many items are supersized. Many people do not realize that the portion sizes they now eat are too big. One of the most important ways to control your blood sugar is to eat the right portion sizes.

Portion control tips:

Think before you bite.

- Think about what one serving of each food you are eating should look like. See the chart on the back of this page for serving size help.
- Ask your doctor about mindful eating, a way of eating in which you are more aware of everything you eat. Often, when people practice mindful eating, they enjoy food more and eat less of it.

When eating at home:

- Downsize your dinner.
- Meet yourself half-way – decrease your serving sizes by half, then fill in the rest of your meal with vegetables or some fresh fruit.
- Pause after eating the first half and find out if you are really still hungry. You may find you can eat less than you thought and still feel full.





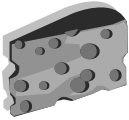








When eating out:

- Avoid buffets.
- Ask for a doggie bag – eat only half the meal and take the other half home.
- Split your dinner with a friend or family member.
- Ask to substitute (for example, ask for steamed vegetables instead of french fries).

When shopping:

- Pay attention to food labels. If it's fat free, you still need to watch portion size and calories. Often, the fat is replaced by sugar. Foods labeled "no sugar added" can still have sugar. They may naturally contain sugars which your body uses just like table sugar.

This chart shows single portions of common foods:

A SERVING OF:	IS THE SIZE OF:
3 ounces meat 	A deck of cards 
3 ounces fish 	A checkbook 
1 ounce cheese 	4 dice 
Medium potato 	A computer mouse 
2 tablespoons peanut butter 	A ping pong ball 
1 cup pasta 	A tennis ball 
A bagel 	A hockey puck 