

Planning Healthy Meals



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Healthy Eating with Diabetes

Having diabetes does not mean that you have to give up the foods that you like. The best meal plan for diabetes is one that includes foods and flavors you enjoy, fits into your lifestyle, and helps you to manage your glucose levels. Since there is no eating pattern that will work for everyone, meeting with a registered dietitian is one of the most important steps in finding the best meal plan for you.

Whatever meal plan you choose, understanding carbohydrates (carbs) will be an important part of managing your glucose levels. Carbs, protein and fat are the main nutrients in food. Carbs raise your glucose because they turn into sugar in the body.

Foods with carbs
raise glucose levels
the most.

- ▶ Sweetened drinks
- ▶ Sweets, desserts, snack foods
- ▶ Fruit (fresh, canned, dried, juice)
- ▶ Milk, yogurt
- ▶ Potatoes, corn, peas, starchy beans
- ▶ Bread, rice, pasta, cereal, whole grains

Lower-carb foods
raise glucose levels a
very small amount.

- ▶ Non-starchy vegetables

Proteins and fats
are not carbs so they
raise glucose levels
the least.

- ▶ Meat, poultry, seafood
- ▶ Cheese, eggs
- ▶ Nuts, seeds, soy products
- ▶ Fats (ex: olive oil, avocado, butter)

Carbohydrates

Carbs as Part of a Healthy Meal Plan

Although they raise glucose levels, carbs are fuel for the body and part of a healthy well-balanced meal plan. The amount of carbohydrate needed at meals and snacks is different for each of us. It can vary from person to person depending on a variety of factors, including current weight and activity level.

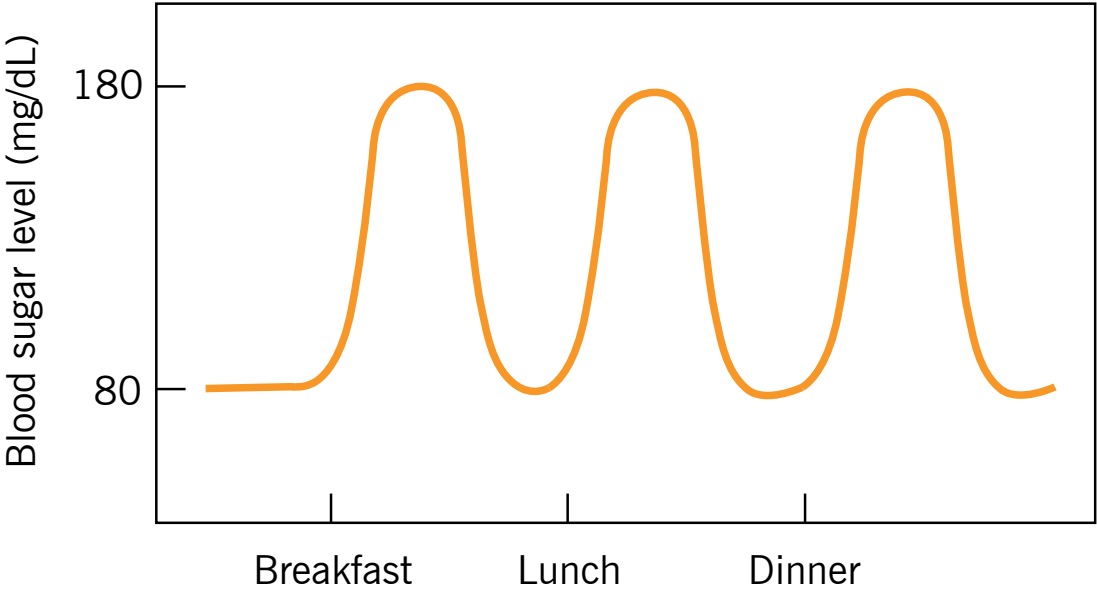
If you have not had a chance to meet with a registered dietitian yet, here are some tips that can help with glucose management until your first visit:

- Aim for 30-60g of carb (2-4 carb choices) at each meal.
- Try to eat three meals per day.
- Aim for fresh fruits, fresh vegetables and high-fiber foods.
- Include protein in any meal or snack that contains carbs.
- Avoid sweets, sweet drinks (including juice), and processed foods.
- Avoid foods for which you have a difficult time limiting the portion size.
- Plan your meals so your plate looks like the plate shown later in this book.

Carb Grams vs. Carb Choices

A gram is the carb measurement that is listed on all nutrition facts labels. It is the most common way of measuring the amount of carbohydrate in foods. Carb choices are measurements of carbohydrate found on some food packages and in some food lists for people with diabetes. One carb choice is the same as 15 grams of carbohydrate.

Since carbs turn into glucose in your body, your glucose level increases when you eat carbs. But with the help of extra insulin either released from your pancreas or taken as an injection, your glucose level should return to your pre-meal target range within the next four hours. This means that the amount of carbohydrate you eat or drink at meals and snacks will impact the amount of insulin your body needs in order to maintain target glucose levels.

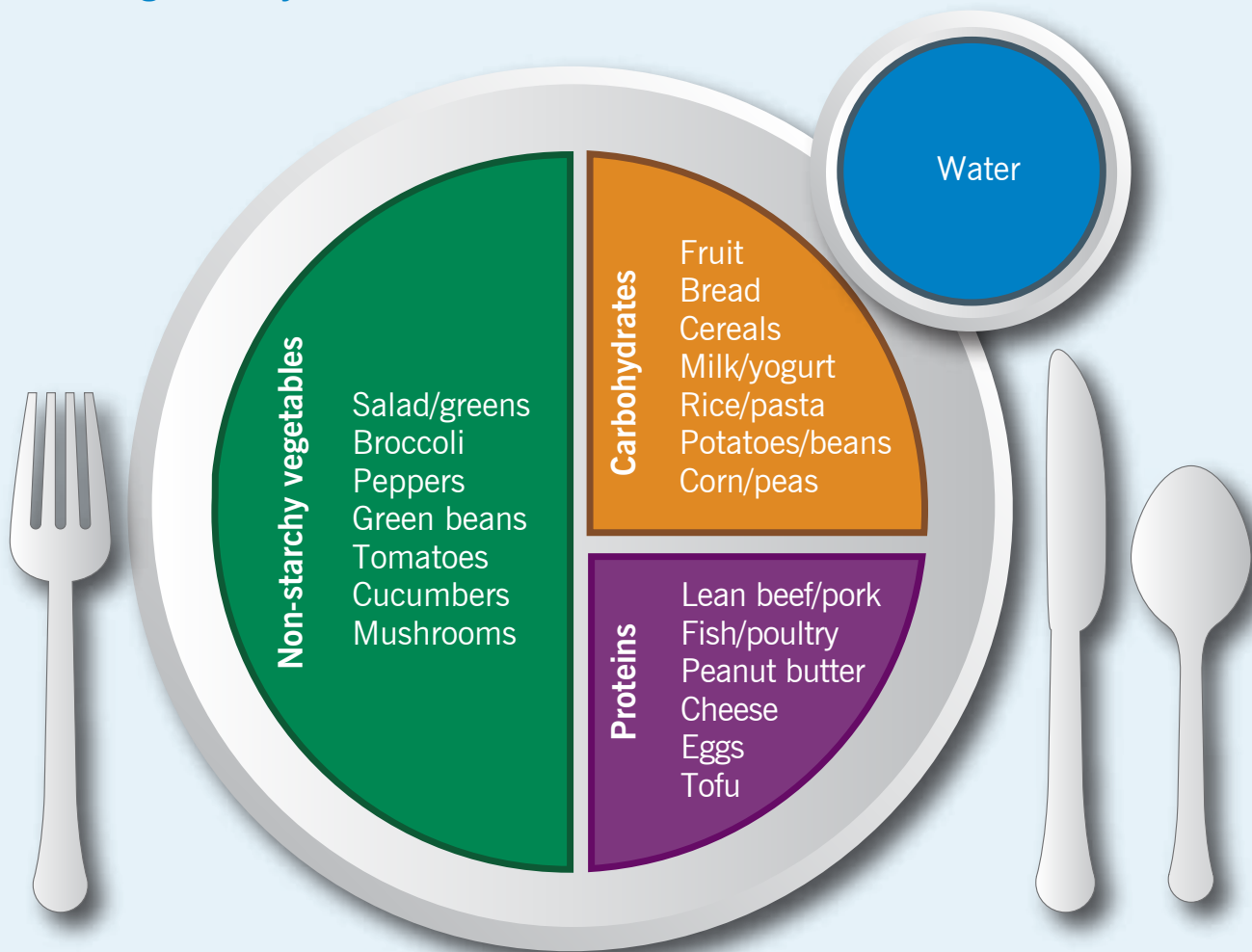


Food and Medication Safety

If you use set doses of mealtime insulin or medications called sulfonylureas (for example: glyburide, glipizide or glimepiride) follow these guidelines to avoid low glucose related to meal planning:

- Do not skip or delay meals.
- Eat carbs at each meal.
- Aim for the same amount of carbs at each meal every day.

Planning Healthy Meals



Food Labels

Using Nutrition Information to Count Carbs

1. Look at the **servicing size**. If you are eating more or less than the serving size listed, then adjust the number of carb grams you are counting.
2. Aim for foods that are **very low in added sugars**.
3. Look at the **total carbohydrate grams (g)**. If your carb target is in grams, then the number listed is the amount of grams for this food. If your target is in choices, then go to step 4.
4. Divide the carb grams by 15 to determine the number of carb choices to count for this food.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (120g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	180
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2.5g	3%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 430mg	19%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 3g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 7g	14%
Vitamin D 0.8mcg	4%
Calcium 78mg	6%
Iron 0.36mg	2%
Potassium 376mg	8%
<small>*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.</small>	

← Serving size

← Total Carbohydrate

← Added Sugars

Below are sample food labels from two types of yogurt. How are they different? Which type of yogurt would affect your glucose level more?

Non-fat Plain Greek Yogurt

Nutrition Facts	
5 servings per container	
Serving size	3/4 cup (170g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	90
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 65mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 6g	2%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 16g	32%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 187mg	15%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 250mg	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.	

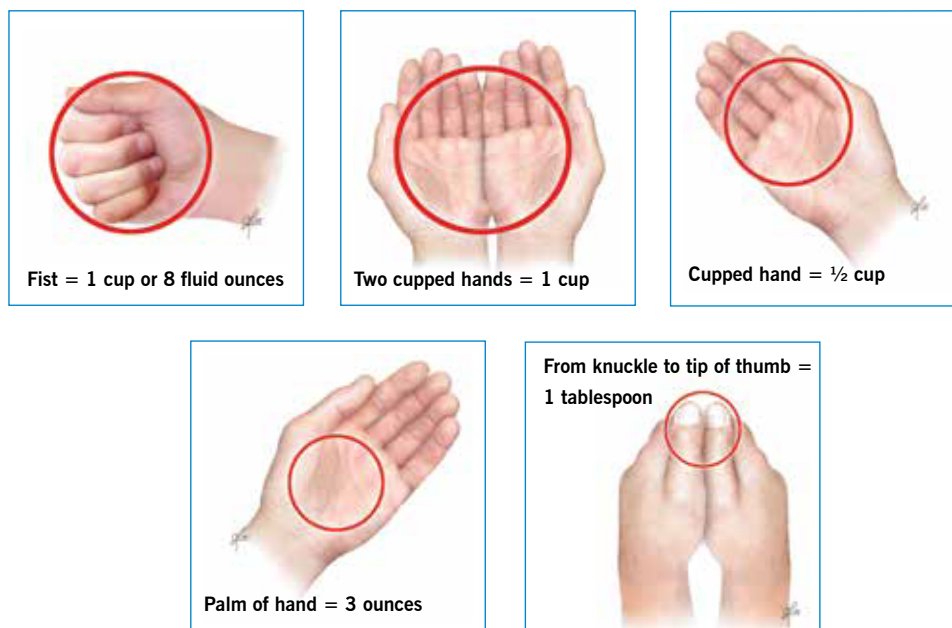
Peach Whole Milk Yogurt

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size	1 container (170g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	180
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 6g	8%
Saturated Fat 4g	20%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 25mg	8%
Sodium 95mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 23g	
Includes 13g Added Sugars	26%
Protein 6g	12%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 282mg	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.	

If you are using carb choices, refer to the table below to see how the carb grams on the food label convert to carb choices.

Grams of carbohydrate:	Carbohydrate choices:
0-5	Do not count
6-10	1/2 carbohydrate choice
11-20	1 carbohydrate choice
21-25	1 1/2 carbohydrate choices
26-35	2 carbohydrate choices
36-40	2 1/2 carbohydrate choices
41-50	3 carbohydrate choices
51-55	3 1/2 carbohydrate choices
56-65	4 carbohydrate choices

When you don't have measuring utensils, you can use your hands. The "hand method" provides an easy way to decide what is a reasonable portion of food. The portion sizes use an adult hand as a guide.



Carbohydrate Lists

On the following pages, you will find estimated carb grams and choices for some common foods.

CARBOHYDRATES

Starchy Foods

One serving = 15 carb grams (1 carb choice)

1 slice bread	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooked pasta or rice
2 slices low calorie bread	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked wild rice
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked oatmeal	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened cereal
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked grits	1 frozen waffle or pancake
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup granola	2 hard taco shells or 1 6-inch tortilla
$\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooked couscous or quinoa	

One serving = 30 carb grams (2 carb choices)

1 English muffin	1 pita bread
1 hot dog/hamburger bun	1 medium roll

One serving = 60 carb grams (4 carb choices)

1 bagel (bakery size)

Starchy Vegetables, Beans, and Lentils

One serving = 15 carb grams (1 carb choice)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup corn or peas	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup baked beans
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup mashed potatoes	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked lentils or beans (black, garbanzo, kidney, lima, pinto, white, navy)
1 cup mixed vegetables	
1 cup acorn or butternut squash	

One serving = 30 carb grams (2 carb choices)

1 medium potato or sweet potato (6 ounces)	1 ear of corn
--	---------------

One Serving = 60 carb grams (4 carb choices)

1 large potato or sweet potato (12 ounces)	Medium to large fast food fries
--	---------------------------------

Dairy

One serving = 12 carb grams (about 1 carb choice)

- 1 cup milk (skim, 1%, 2%, Whole)
- 1 cup soy, lactose-free, or rice milk
- 1 light or sugar-free yogurt

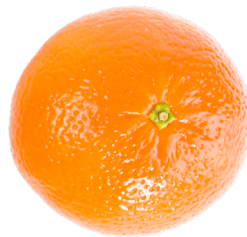
One serving = 25-30 carb grams (about 2 carb choices)

- 1 cup chocolate milk
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup non-fat yogurt

Fruits

One serving = 15 carb grams (1 carb choice)

- 1 small apple / orange / peach / pear / nectarine
(the size of a tennis ball, 4 ounces when weighed with skin/core/peel)



- | | |
|--|---|
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup blueberries/blackberries | 2 Tbsp dried fruit |
| 1 cup raspberries | 4 apricots (fresh or dried) |
| 6 strawberries or $1\frac{1}{4}$ cup | 1 kiwi |
| $1\frac{1}{4}$ cup watermelon or one slice | $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh pineapple |
| 1 cup cantaloupe or honeydew melon | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of light canned fruit |
| 12 to 17 grapes or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit juice |
| 12 cherries or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | 3 dates or prunes |

One serving = 30 carb grams (2 carb choices)

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1 large apple/orange/peach/pear/nectarine
(8 ounces when weighed with
skin/core/peel) | 1 mango or papaya |
| 1 banana (8 ounces with peel) | 1 whole grapefruit |

Sweets and Desserts

One serving = 15 carb grams (1 carb choice)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 small brownie (2 inch piece) | 1/2 cup frozen yogurt |
| 2 small cookies (2 inch) | 1 frozen fruit bar (3 ounces) |
| 1/2 cup sugar-free pudding | 1 piece cake without frosting (2 inch) |
| 1/2 cup ice cream | |

One serving = 30 carb grams (2 carb choices)

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 glazed doughnut | 1/2 cup sherbet |
| 1 slice banana / fruit / zucchini bread | 1 piece frosted cake (2 inch piece) |
| 1/2 cup regular pudding | |

One serving = 45 carb grams (3 carb choices)

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1/2 cup fruit cobbler | 1 glazed cake doughnut |
| 1/8 fruit pie | |

One serving = 60 carb grams (4 carb choices)

- 1 large muffin

Snack Foods

One serving = 15 carb grams (1 carb choice)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 3 cups air-popped popcorn (no butter) | 3 ginger snaps or vanilla wafers |
| 1 oz. baked chips (about 17) | |

One serving = 30 carb grams (2 carb choices)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 medium granola bar | 25 mini crackers |
|----------------------|------------------|



Combination Foods

One serving = 15 carb grams (1 carb choice)

2 cups soup, broth-based, made with noodles or rice

One serving = 30 carb grams (2 carb choices)

1 cup noodle or rice casserole

1 cup lasagna

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup macaroni salad

1 cup potato salad

1 slice pizza, regular crust ($\frac{1}{8}$ of 12-in med)

2 cups soup, milk-based

Other Carbohydrates

One serving = 6-10 carb grams ($\frac{1}{2}$ carb choice)

2 Tbsp coffee creamer, flavored

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup gravy

One serving = 15 carb grams (1 carb choice)

$1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp fruit spread (100% fruit)

1 Tbsp jam or jelly

1 Tbsp honey

1 Tbsp sugar (brown/white)

1 Tbsp chocolate syrup

1 Tbsp syrup (regular)

2 Tbsp syrup (light)

2 Tbsp barbecue sauce

2 Tbsp sweet and sour sauce

3 Tbsp ketchup

2 Tbsp sweetened salad dressing

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup spaghetti sauce



LOWER-CARB FOODS

Non-starchy Vegetables

One serving = 5 carb grams (less than one carb choice)

One serving = 1 cup raw or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked

Non-starchy vegetables are some of the most important foods to include at meals. These foods are low in calories, fill you up, increase your fiber intake, and have little effect on raising glucose levels. Including a variety of vegetables is an important part of healthy living.

Listed below are types of non-starchy vegetables:

- Asparagus
- Baby Corn
- Bamboo Shoots
- Beans (Green, Wax)
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Green Onions or Scallions
- Jicama
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Mixed Vegetables, without Corn, Peas, or Pasta
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Onions
- Pea Pods
- Peppers
- Rutabaga
- Salad Greens (All varieties)
- Sauerkraut
- Spinach
- Sprouts
- Squash (Summer, Crookneck, Zucchini)
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Swiss Chard
- Tomatoes
- Turnips
- Water Chestnuts

Sugar Alcohols and Sugar Substitutes

Sugar alcohols are carbohydrates that are absorbed very slowly. For this reason, they affect your blood sugar less than other carbs. Although foods containing sugar alcohols may be labeled “sugar-free”, they still contain carbs and should be counted in your meal plan. Some examples are sugar-free candy, chocolate, and cookies.

Warnings about sugar alcohols:

1. Eating too much sugar alcohol may cause gas and diarrhea.
2. Do not use low-calorie sweeteners or sugar-free foods to treat a low glucose level.

Sugar substitutes are artificial sweeteners that do not contain carbohydrates. They are used in place of sugar and can be safely consumed in moderation. Some examples include stevia, sucralose, and aspartame. Sugar substitutes alone will not raise your blood sugar, but they are often combined with other carb sources that will. For example, no-sugar-added ice cream is typically sweetened with artificial sweeteners, but it also includes milk which makes it a high-carb food.

Sugar-free does not always mean carb-free.

Other Nutrients

NO-CARB FOODS

You have learned that food contains three main nutrients: carbs, protein, and fat. Now that you know how to count your carbs, you may be wondering about the other nutrients. Although protein and fat can impact your glucose level, they do not affect it nearly as much as carbs. These two nutrients can, however, impact calories and heart health. Protein and fat are not usually counted for glucose management, but portion control and good choices are still important for healthy eating.

Proteins

Here are some tips for choosing and preparing proteins:

- › Choose lean proteins (see the list that follows).
- › Trim any visible fat from meat.
- › Remove skin from poultry.
- › Choose baking, grilling, or broiling instead of frying.
- › Try low sodium broth instead of gravies or sauces.
- › Aim for a serving size of meat that is equal to a deck of cards.

Here are some examples of lean proteins:

- › Chicken and turkey
- › Fish (oily fish like salmon contain healthy fats)
- › Lean pork chops
- › Canadian bacon or turkey sausage/bacon
- › Low fat cottage cheese
- › Low fat cheeses (3 grams of fat or less per serving)
- › Egg whites
- › Extra lean ground beef (93% lean), sirloin, or New York strip steak
- › Beans or legumes ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup also counts as 1 carb choice or 15g of carb)
- › Tofu

Fats

As with protein, healthy choices are important with foods in the fat category. Most meals already include some fat, so when adding fat to meals do so in very small amounts. Aim for no more than 2 added fat servings per meal for women and no more than 3 added fat servings per meal for men.

Monounsaturated and Polyunsaturated Fats

Choose these fats *more often*.

Olive oil (1 tsp)
Canola oil (1 tsp)
Nuts (1 ounce)
Avocado (2 Tbsp)
Soybean or corn oil (1 tsp)
Tub margarine (1 Tbsp)

Saturated Fats

Limit these fats.

Butter (1 tsp)
Cream (2 Tbsp)
Cream cheese (1 Tbsp)
Sour cream (2 Tbsp)
Coconut and palm kernel (1 tsp)

Trans Fats

Avoid these foods that contain trans fats.

Donuts
Bakery foods
Some packaged snacks and candies
Vegetable shortening
Stick margarine

Meal Ideas

30 carb grams (2 carb choices)
per meal*

Menu

Breakfast

- › **6 oz. Greek yogurt**
 - › **1 cup raspberries**
 - › 1/4 cup almonds
 - › coffee or tea
- or**
- › **1 cup steel-cut oats (made with water)**
 - › 1/4 cup canned pumpkin
 - › cinnamon and stevia to taste
 - › 6-12 walnut halves
 - › coffee or tea

Lunch

- › 1/2 cup tuna salad with 2 Tbsp. light mayonnaise
 - › **10 whole wheat crackers**
 - › carrots, cucumber slices, celery sticks
 - › 1 light string cheese
 - › **1 apple**
 - › unsweetened iced tea
- or**
- › 2.5 oz. mozzarella cheese
 - › 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes
 - › **1 cup chickpeas**
 - › 2 Tbsp. olive oil and balsamic vinegar
 - › 1-2 cups baby spinach
 - › **1 slice whole grain bread**
 - › water

Dinner

- › 3-4 oz. baked lemon cod
 - › wilted spinach with 1 Tbsp. slivered almonds
 - › 1/3 **cup cooked quinoa**
 - › **1 cup fresh strawberries with low fat whipped topping**
 - › unsweetened green tea
- or**
- › 1 turkey burger
 - › **1 low-carb bun**
 - › 2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
 - › arugula salad
 - › 2 Tbsp. olive oil and balsamic vinegar
 - › **frozen Greek yogurt ice cream bar**
 - › water

*carbohydrate choices are bolded

45 carb grams (3 carb choices)
per meal*

Menu

Breakfast

- › coffee or tea
 - › Homemade trail mix:
 - 100 calorie pack of almonds
 - **2 Tbsp. dried fruit**
 - **1/2 cup granola**
- or**
- › 2 scrambled eggs
 - › 2 Tbsp. avocado
 - › **2 slices whole grain toast**
 - › **3/4 cup blueberries**
 - › coffee or tea

Lunch

- › **1 whole grain wrap**
 - › 3 oz. sliced turkey
 - › lettuce and 1 sliced tomato
 - › **1 cup tomato soup**
 - › **1 small pear**
 - › water or calorie-free drink
- or**
- › spinach salad
 - › 3-4 oz. grilled chicken breast
 - › 2 Tbsp. light dressing
 - › **2/3 cup cooked brown rice**
 - › 1/4 cup low-fat feta cheese
 - › **1 cup melon**
 - › water or calorie-free drink

Dinner

- › **2/3 cup whole grain pasta**
 - › **1/2 cup pasta sauce**
 - › 1/2 cup roasted broccoli
 - › mixed green salad
 - › 2 Tbsp. light dressing
 - › water or calorie-free drink
- or**
- › **1 cup vegetable lasagna**
 - › 1/2 cup roasted asparagus
 - › **1 slice whole grain bread**
 - › sugar-free gelatin
 - › water or calorie-free drink

*carbohydrate choices are bolded

60

carb grams (4 carb choices)
per meal*

Menu

Breakfast

- ▶ 2 poached eggs
- ▶ **2 slices whole grain toast**
with olive oil spread
- ▶ **1 cup strawberries**
- ▶ 2 strips turkey bacon
- ▶ **1 cup skim or fortified soy milk**

or

- ▶ **1 whole grain English muffin**
- ▶ 1 Tbsp. peanut butter
- ▶ **1/2 of a large banana**
- ▶ **6 oz. Greek yogurt**
- ▶ coffee or tea

Lunch

- ▶ peanut butter and jelly sandwich
made with 2 Tbsp. peanut butter,
1 Tbsp. jelly on 2 slices
whole wheat bread
- ▶ **1 light yogurt**
- ▶ 1 cup raw vegetables with
2 Tbsp. low-fat dressing for dip
- ▶ sugar-free iced tea

or

- ▶ 3 oz. grilled chicken on
2 ounce whole grain bun with
lettuce and tomato
- ▶ 1 Tbsp. light mayonnaise
- ▶ **17 small grapes**
- ▶ **1 cup vegetable barley soup**
- ▶ calorie-free beverage

Dinner

- ▶ 3 oz. baked chicken
- ▶ **1/2 large sweet potato**
- ▶ 1 cup green beans
- ▶ **1 small cornbread muffin**
- ▶ **1/2 cup sugar-free**
banana pudding
- ▶ calorie-free beverage

or

- ▶ 3 oz. broiled lean steak
- ▶ **1 ear of corn**
- ▶ salad with 2 Tbsp. low-fat
dressing
- ▶ **1 small whole wheat dinner roll**
- ▶ **1 cup melon cubes**
- ▶ calorie-free beverage

*carbohydrate choices are bolded

TIPS for Success

PLAN AHEAD! Planning will help you be successful in maintaining your meal plan and exercise routine. By having a plan, you are less likely to give in to cravings or skip exercise.

Listed below are ideas for healthy meal planning:

- Go grocery shopping with a list and stick to the list.
- If your time is limited, buy fresh non-starchy vegetables that are already cut and cleaned. You could also try cutting up vegetables for 2-3 days. Bag these in the refrigerator for a quick snack or meal addition.
- Purchase frozen, steamed vegetables (focusing on the non-starchy items) to have on hand for a quick way to add these foods to a meal.
- Avoid juice or regular soda as these are high in calories and quickly raise a person's glucose level. Use these drinks only for treating low glucose.
- Choose lower carbohydrate pasta options. Check local stores for availability.
- Choose fruits that are higher in fiber and also provide a larger serving size (e.g., berries).
- At lunch and dinner, focus on including non-starchy vegetables as 1/2 of the plate. These vegetables are high in fiber, very low in carbohydrate, and will fill you up!
- Limit unhealthy fats and cholesterol in your diet.
- Make changes as a family. People are more successful in groups. Remember: balanced eating is healthy eating.
- Plan for desserts. Eat a meal of a lean protein and two non-starchy vegetables, knowing that you will be eating the majority of your carbohydrate in the dessert at the end of the meal.

Blank Log Sheets

Day/Date

Breakfast		Lunch		Dinner		Bedtime		Comments
Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	

Day/Date

Breakfast		Lunch		Dinner		Bedtime		Comments
Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	

Day/Date

Breakfast		Lunch		Dinner		Bedtime		Comments
Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	

Day/Date

Breakfast		Lunch		Dinner		Bedtime		Comments
Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	

Day/Date

Breakfast		Lunch		Dinner		Bedtime		Comments
Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	

Day/Date

Breakfast		Lunch		Dinner		Bedtime		Comments
Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	

Day/Date

Breakfast		Lunch		Dinner		Bedtime		Comments
Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	Glucose level	Medication	

**To schedule a diabetes education visit at a
Cleveland Clinic location near you, call one of the
following numbers:**

Ashtabula, Conneaut or Jefferson 440.994.7598

Union Hospital 330.364.0854

All other northeast Ohio locations 216.444.6568

