

Eating well with Diabetes



This information sheet aims to give general information and help you to make sensible food choices when choosing foods for yourself or for someone you care for who has diabetes. If you are concerned that a person with diabetes is at risk from malnutrition the best course of action is to contact a Dietitian, they will be able to give you the correct guidance.

- **Eat three meals a day** - Avoid skipping meals and space out your breakfast, lunch and evening meal over the day. This will not only help control your appetite but will also help to control your blood glucose levels, two low sugar/fat snacks may be added if required
- **Limit sugar and sugary foods** – Having Diabetes does not mean you have to eat a sugar free diet. Using sugar free, no added sugar or diet fizzy drinks/ squashes instead of sugary versions can be an easy way to reduce the sugar in your diet.
- **At each meal include starchy carbohydrate foods** – Such as bread, pasta, chapatis, yam, rice, potatoes, noodles and cereals. The amount of carbohydrate you eat is important to control your blood glucose levels. Try to eat those that are more slowly absorbed as they won't affect your blood glucose levels as much. Better choices include: pasta, basmati or easy cook rice, grainy breads such as granary and rye, new potatoes, porridge oats, All Bran and natural museli.
- **Cut down on the fat you eat** - Particularly saturated fats, as a low fat diet benefits health. Choose unsaturated fats or oils such as olive oil and rapeseed oil. Cutting down on fats can also help you to lose weight, try to use less margarine and butter, choose lean meats and lower fat dairy foods such as skimmed milks and low fat yoghurts. Try to Grill, steam or oven bake when cooking as this will also cut down the amount of oils that you are consuming.
- **Eat more fruit and vegetables** – Aim for at least five portions a day to provide you with vitamins, minerals and fibre to help you balance your overall diet.
- **Include more beans and lentils** – such as kidney beans, butter beans, chickpeas or red and green lentils. These have less of an effect on your blood glucose levels and may help control your blood glucose levels. These can be added to stews, casseroles and soups or salads.
- **Aim for at least two portions of oily fish a week** – Oily fish contains Omega 3 which helps protect against heart disease. Examples of this include mackerel, sardines, salmon and pilchards.
- **Reduce the salt in your diet to 6g or less a day** – More than this can raise your blood pressure, which can lead to a stroke or heart disease. Limit the amount of processed foods you eat and try flavouring foods with herbs and spices.
- **Drink alcohol in moderation only** – the recommended guidelines are 2 units a day for a woman 3 units a day for a man. Alcohol contains empty calories so think about cutting back if you are trying to lose weight. Never drink on an empty stomach, as alcohol can cause hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose levels) which is more likely to occur when taking certain diabetes medications.
- **Don't use diabetic foods or drinks** – They offer no benefit to people with diabetes. They will still affect your blood glucose levels, contain just as much fat and calories as the ordinary versions, they can have a laxative effect and are expensive.

This and further information can be found on the Diabetes UK website: www.diabetes.org.uk

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The eatwell plate demonstrates a healthy balanced diet, It shows how much should come from each food group.



www.nhs.uk/livewell

To help you achieve the right balance and choose a healthier diet, which is suitable for a person with diabetes we have compiled a chart demonstrating healthier choices.

<u>Foods that can be eaten on a regular basis</u>	<u>Foods to avoid or to be eaten in /small amounts</u>
All fruit and vegetables are suitable for A diabetic to eat – 5 portions a day is recommended and spread over the whole day. A portion is equal to – A small bowl of salad, 3 heaped tablespoons of veg. A banana or apple or a small glass of fruit juice.	
Wholegrain bread/rolls, wholegrain breakfast cereals, Potatoes, Wholegrain Pasta/Rice, Basmati Rice, Multigrain and Granary Breads, Porridge, All Bran.	Fried foods, pastry, sausage rolls, meat or pork pies, foods coated in batter. Snacks such as crisps, cakes, biscuits,
Lean meats – Fish, Chicken and Turkey Baked Beans, chickpeas lentils.	
Low Fat Yoghurts, Cottage Cheese, Low fat spreads	Mayonnaise, salad cream, butter, lard, cream, Full Fat Yoghurts
Diet/sugar free drink options, Water, Tea Coffee (using sweeteners)	Normal Squash, Lucozade, Fizzy Drinks, Honey, Sweets

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