Type 2 diabetes

A healthy, balanced way of eating for people with diabetes is no different than for everyone else. There is no need to buy special food or prepare separate meals. Here are some ways you can control your blood glucose (sugar) level by eating well and being active.

Limit sometimes foods

- Limit ‘sometimes foods’ high in fat, sugar and/or salt (for example chips, soft drink, biscuits).
- Enjoy these foods occasionally and in small amounts.

Eat everyday foods from the five food groups

Try to include a variety of foods from each of the five food groups every day, including:

- grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and high in fibre
- vegetables and legumes/beans
- fruit
- milk, yoghurt and cheese
- lean meat and meat alternatives, such as eggs, legumes and nuts.

When eating carbohydrates, try to make healthier choices

- When you have carbohydrate food or drinks, it breaks down to glucose (sugar). This glucose is used to fuel the body, like petrol for a car. Some types of carbohydrate are better for you than others.
- There are many carbohydrate foods you can enjoy every day.
## Carbohydrate foods you can enjoy every day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grain (cereal) foods</th>
<th>Choose wholegrain types of bread, cereal, rice, pasta, noodles and crackers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starchy vegetables</td>
<td>Potato, sweet potato, corn, legumes and lentils (kidney beans, chickpeas, baked beans).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Choose fresh, frozen or canned fruit (no added sugar), or only occasionally a small amount of dried fruit, or a small glass of 100% fruit juice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy products</td>
<td>Milk, yoghurt and cheese.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some carbohydrate foods and drinks contain energy but lack other important nutrients. These foods should be eaten only sometimes and in small amounts.

## Carbohydrate foods to have only sometimes or in small amounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drinks high in sugar</th>
<th>Have less cordial, soft drink and fruit juice drinks with added sugar. Save these for special occasions, and choose water as your main drink.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foods high in sugar</td>
<td>Have less sweet spreads such as jam, honey and chocolate spreads. Instead choose other bread toppings such as salad, cheese and lean meat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foods high in fat and sugar</td>
<td>Have less chocolate, lollies, biscuits, ice cream, pastries and cakes. Save these for special occasions, and choose foods from the five food groups for meals and snacks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This general advice was accurate at the time of publication (April 2015). For more information about Type 2 diabetes and your individual needs, see your GP, an accredited practising dietitian or a diabetes educator or go to www.diabetesaustralia.com.au
Enjoy regular physical activity

- Physical activity helps to improve your diabetes control by helping insulin to work better as well as keeping your weight and blood pressure down.
- For aerobic fitness: on most days try to do at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity that improves fitness. Try walking, cycling or dancing.
- For strength: two to three times a week, try to build some strength activities into your routine. Try lifting and carrying objects (for example groceries), walking up stairs or digging in the garden.
- For balance: make a time each day to do these activities. Try standing on one foot or walking heel-to-toe.
- For flexibility: try to do some form of stretching every day. You could try Tai Chi or dancing, or even do some simple stretching exercises while watching TV.
- If you have been inactive it is best to see your GP for advice before starting any physical activity.

Eat regular meals and spread carbohydrates out evenly over the day

- Aim for regular meals. Some people with diabetes may also need to include snacks between meals. Talk to your doctor, diabetes educator or accredited practising dietitian about what is best for you.
- Try to spread your carbohydrate foods out evenly over the day by including some at each meal. This keeps energy levels up without causing high blood glucose levels.
- Large amounts of any carbohydrate food at one time can raise blood glucose levels.

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