Healthy eating and type 2 diabetes

Learning how to manage your diabetes will help you feel better and can prevent health complications.

**Weight control**

If overweight, losing weight is one of the best ways to improve blood sugar control and lower your risk of complications.

Depending on your age and other factors, weight loss may not be right for you – discuss this with your diabetes team.

- Aim for realistic weight loss. A loss of 5-10% body weight can improve overall health.
- If gaining weight, preventing further weight gain may be more realistic.
- Follow the recommendations for healthy eating.
- Consider the portion size of all foods at each meal and snack.
- Include eating styles and habits that are sustainable to assist with long-term weight control.
- Eat mindfully.

**Exercise is important**

Being physically active can make it easier to manage your weight and your diabetes.

- Check with your doctor first whether exercise is suitable for you.

- Find an activity that you enjoy and aim to increase your physical activity to 300 minutes per week.

- You may have to adjust your medication or diet prior to exercise. Check with your diabetes team.

**Healthy eating**

A healthy diet includes a variety of foods from the five food groups: grain foods (mostly wholegrain); vegetables, legumes and beans; lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds; milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives; and fruit. Drinks should include sugar-free beverages mostly.

**Carbohydrate foods**

- While carbohydrate foods directly affect your blood glucose levels (BGLs) they are part of an overall healthy diet.
- Know the type and amount of carbohydrate in carbohydrate foods.
- Spread intake of carbohydrate foods throughout the day. Too much carbohydrate at one time will increase your BGLs.
- Limit foods and drinks with added sugar such as lollies, chocolate, cakes, biscuits, soft drink and flavoured milk.
- It may also be necessary to choose low glycaemic index (GI) carbohydrate food. Examples of low GI foods include grainy bread, rolled oats, most fruit, vegetables and dairy foods, and legumes or lentils.
Fatty foods

- Limit foods with high amounts of saturated fat such as butter, cream, fatty meats, cooking margarine, coconut oil and palm oil. Foods which contain polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are healthier options. These include plant-based oils and spreads (e.g. olive, safflower, sunflower, canola, vegetable and peanut), nut butters/pastes and avocados.

Alcohol

- If you drink alcohol limit intake to no more than two standard drinks per day.
- Alcohol may increase the risk of hypoglycaemia if you are using insulin or certain diabetes medications. Speak to your diabetes team about this.

Artificial sweeteners

- There are different types of artificial sweeteners.
- Some sweeteners may contribute to weight gain.
- Speak to your diabetes team if you have any questions regarding artificial sweeteners.

Individual Meal Plan

To be completed with an Accredited Practising Dietitian

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<th>Breakfast</th>
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<td>Morning snack</td>
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Things I can do to help manage my diabetes:

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