

Healthy eating and type 2 diabetes

Learning how to manage your diabetes can help improve your health. It can also reduce the risk of other health problems.

Healthy eating

Include a variety of foods from the five food groups:

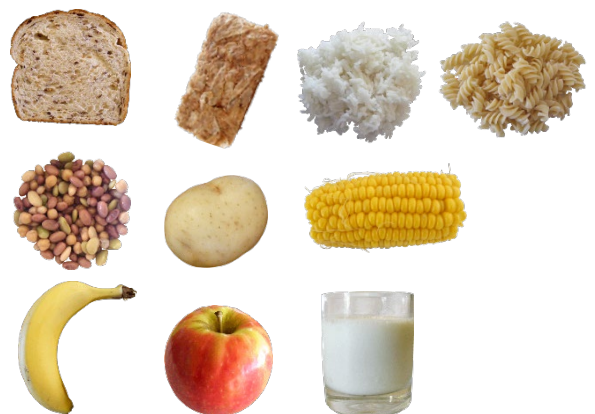
- Grain foods (mostly wholegrain)
- Vegetables, legumes and lentils
- Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, legumes and lentils
- Fruit
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese and dairy alternatives

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are an important part of a healthy balanced diet. They provide our body with energy and other nutrients. Eating too much carbohydrate at a meal can cause blood sugar levels to be higher. If you are using certain diabetes medications, not eating enough carbohydrate can cause low blood sugar. Talk to your dietitian about how to spread carbohydrates over the day for your diabetes management.

Aim to choose healthy carbohydrate foods:

- Wholegrain bread, cereals, rice, pasta/noodles
- Lentils and Legumes
- Starchy vegetables e.g. potato, sweet potato, corn
- Fresh fruit
- Milk and yoghurt



Avoid less healthy carbohydrate choices such as:

- Biscuits, cakes, pastries
- Sugar, soft drink
- Jam, honey, maple syrup
- Chocolate, lollies, chips, ice cream, custard

Sugar substitutes

- Most have little effect on blood sugar levels
- Discuss with your diabetes team if you have any questions

Fats

Choose healthy fat sources such as:

- Unsalted nuts and seeds
- Avocado, tahini
- Plant-based oils e.g. olive, canola, safflower, sunflower, peanut, soybean and sesame
- Fish



Avoid high saturated fat sources:

- Bakery foods such as pastries
- Butter, palm oil, copha, lard
- Deep fried takeaway foods
- Deli meats e.g. ham, salami, luncheon

Alcohol

- If you drink alcohol, limit to no more than two standard drinks per day
- Alcohol may increase your risk of low blood sugar if you are using certain diabetes medications such as insulin. Speak to your diabetes team about this.

Healthy weight

- Eat a wide variety of nutritious foods from the five food groups and include exercise every day.
- If you are overweight, even a 5-10% weight reduction can improve blood sugar control and lower your risk of other health problems.

Physical activity

- Being active can improve your diabetes management.
- Check with your doctor for exercises suitable for you. Examples might include walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, gardening, tennis, team sports or lifting weights.
- Check with your diabetes team if you are taking medication for your diabetes. This may need to be adjusted if you change exercise.

Suggested meal plan

BREAKFAST

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup high fibre cereal with milk and 1 piece of fruit
- OR 2 slices wholegrain toast with peanut butter/ boiled egg/ avocado, with mushrooms and spinach
- OR $\frac{1}{2}$ cup untoasted muesli with 1 small tub yoghurt and a handful of mixed berries

LUNCH

- Wholegrain sandwich (2 slices bread) with tuna/ egg/ lean meat and salad
- OR Wholegrain wrap (1) with tuna/ salmon/ egg/ lean meat and salad
- OR Salad with 1 cup chickpeas/ mixed beans, cheese and salad vegetables

DINNER

- 1 cup spaghetti with lean mince and tomato-based sauce and salad
- OR Grilled salmon/ chicken/ lean meat with 1 medium sized potato and steamed green vegetables
- OR Chicken and vegetable stir fry with $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 cup cooked rice noodles

SNACKS

- 1 serve fruit e.g. 1 medium piece or 2 small pieces
- 1 small tub yoghurt or 1 glass of milk
- 2 Vita-Weat biscuits with 1-2 slices cheese
- 1 handful of unsalted nuts
- Vegetable sticks (e.g. carrot, celery, capsicum) with 1-2 tablespoon hummus/ tzatziki