

## DIABETES: FOOD & NUTRITION

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#### Abstract

*A diabetes diet simply means eating the healthiest foods in moderate amounts & sticking to regular mealtimes. Diabetes diet is a healthy-eating plan that's naturally rich in nutrients & low in fat & calories. Key elements are fruits, vegetables & whole grains. In fact, a diabetes diet is the best eating plan for most everyone. A diabetes diet is based on eating 3 meals a day at regular times. This helps you better use the insulin that your body produces and gets through a medication. A registered dietitian can help you put together a diet based on your health goals and tastes He or she can also talk with you about how to improve your eating habits, such as choosing portion sizes that suit the needs for your size & activity level. With type 2 diabetes, your body doesn't use insulin well & can't keep blood sugar at normal levels. About 90-95% of people with diabetes have type 2. It develops over many years & is usually diagnosed in adults (but more & more in children, teens, & young adults). You may not notice any symptoms, so it's important to get your blood sugar tested if you're at risk. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented and delayed with healthy lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, eating healthy food, & being active.*

*Keywords: Diabetes, Dietitian, Balanced Diet, Heart-healthy, Alcohol, Saturated fats*

#### Introduction

Embracing your healthy-eating plan is the best way to keep your blood glucose level under control & prevent diabetes complications. If you need to lose weight, you can tailor it to your specific goals. Aside from managing your diabetes, a diabetes diet offers other benefits, too. Because a diabetes diet recommends generous amounts of fruits, vegetables & fiber, following it is likely to reduce your risk of cardiovascular diseases & certain types of cancer and consuming low-fat dairy products can reduce your risk of low bone mass in the future. If you have diabetes, it's important that you partner with your doctor & dietitian to create an eating plan that works for you. Use healthy foods, portion control & scheduling to manage your blood glucose level. If you stray from your prescribed diet, you run the risk of fluctuating blood sugar levels & more-serious complications.

## **Foods to avoid**

Diabetes increases your risk of heart disease & stroke by accelerating the development of clogged & hardened arteries. Foods containing the following can work against your goal of a heart-healthy diet.

- **Saturated fats.** Avoid high-fat dairy products & animal proteins such as butter, beef, hot dogs, sausage & bacon. Also limit coconut & palm kernel oils.
- **Trans fats.** Avoid trans fats found in processed snacks, baked goods, shortening & stick margarines.
- **Cholesterol.** Cholesterol sources include high-fat dairy products & high-fat animal proteins, egg yolks, liver, & other organ meats. Aim for no more than 200 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol a day.
- **Sodium.** Aim for less than 2,300 mg of sodium a day. Your doctor may suggest you aim for even less if you have high blood pressure.

## **II. DIABETES FREE LIFE**

Anti-gravity resistance exercises are can be performed in the comfort of your home or a hotel room when traveling. You do not need a gym or fancy equipment to perform these exercises. You simply work against gravity & overcome the resistance imposed by gravity. These will facilitate fat oxidation & glycogen depletion. This is an easy way to cultivate a habit of exercising daily without going to the gym and it can be used to utilize the extra blood glucose after a heavy meal. If you want to burn off the extra blood sugar after a heavy meal, perform these exercises after 2hrs of consuming a heavy meal.

### *1) 1. Eat a Balanced Diet*

You should eat a diferent of foods to meet your nutritional requirements. Your dietitian will work with you to ensure you eat a good amount & types of food from each of the food groups.

### *2) 2. Moderate Your Sugar Intake*

Sugar products contain carbohydrates, which can affect your blood sugar level. They are therefore among the foods to avoid with diabetes when possible, or take very occasionally & in small amounts only.

- Replace Sugar drinks (e.g. soft drinks, sweetened packaged drinks & fruit juice) with unsweetened drinks (e.g. water, plain tea & unsweetened soy milk)
- Have fresh fruits instead of fruit juice & canned fruits soaked in syrup
- Choose a piece of fresh fruit for dessert instead

- Avoid eating junk food that are high in sugar content such as jellies, ice cream, chocolates & cake

3) *3. Moderate Your Consumption of Rice & Other Starch*

Noodles & starchy vegetables (e.g. potatoes, corn & yam) contain carbohydrates, which will affect blood sugar levels.

- Spread these foods evenly throughout the day to manage your blood sugar level
- Select foods rich in fibre, such as brown rice & wholemeal or wholegrain bread, to prevent the rapid rise of glucose in your blood

Every individual has different nutritional requirements; your dietitian will advise you on the appropriate portion sizes.

4) *4. Fruits for Diabetics*

It is recommended to have two servings of fruits per day to provide you with adequate vitamins, minerals, antioxidants & fibre. As fruit also contains carbohydrate in the form of sugars, your blood sugar levels will be affected if you consume too much.

- Spread fruits evenly throughout the day
- Choose fresh fruits instead of fruit juice and canned fruits soaked in syrup
- Limit the amount of dried fruits you eat, as they have a higher sugar content than fresh fruits

5) *5. Limit Fat Intake*

Type 2 diabetics should not consume excessive amounts of fat or oils, as this decreases effectiveness of insulin action.

- Use limited oil when cooking & remove all visible fat before eating
- Instead of deep-frying food, select healthier cooking methods such as steaming, boiling & grilling food. Limit deep-fried foods to one or two times a week
- Choose lean meat or poultry without skin
- Choose fat-free or lower-fat food products such as low-fat milk & fat-free yoghurt
- Go for healthier cooking oils with polyunsaturated fat (e.g. corn, soybean) or monounsaturated fat (e.g. olive, canola)

### 6) 6. Moderate Your Alcohol Intake

Alcohol is only allowed if blood sugar is well-controlled. Avoid alcohol if you have a high blood triglyceride level, kidney disease or heart disease. A standard alcoholic drink contains 10 grams of alcohol, which translates to 100 millilitres of wine or two-thirds of a can (220 millilitres) of regular beer.

- Drink alcohol in moderation, i.e. not more than one standard drink per day
- Use sugar-free sodas or water to mix your drinks & cocktails

### Conclusion

Diabetes is a chronic illness wherein your blood sugar levels rise abnormally, affecting different organs of your body. Insufficient production of insulin is the main cause of diabetes. Different types of diabetes can occur to you causing different kinds of impact on your health. Once your blood sugar levels start rising, there is no coming back from that. General symptoms of anxiety include frequent urination, weight loss, blurry vision, extreme fatigue & increased thirst & hunger. Diabetic symptoms in women can cause yeast infections, vaginal dryness & urinary tract infections. Pregnant women can also suffer from diabetes which is popularly known as gestational diabetes. There are many health complications that come along with diabetes such as kidney failure, heart stroke, depression, dementia, skin conditions, hearing loss & loss of sight. The most important thing you need to pay attention to when you are diabetic is your lifestyle & your eating habits. You should eat healthy if you want to keep your blood sugar levels in check. There are certain power foods that are extremely beneficial for people suffering from diabetes. You will obviously have to keep taking your medications, but these foods will make the process of getting better easy for you. Foods that are nutritious & have low glycaemic index are beneficial for diabetic patients.

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