

## Steps to consider

Step 1: Enjoy a variety of foods.

- Include fruits, vegetables, meats or alternatives, dairy choices, and carbohydrates every day.
- Focus on serving sizes. Choose reasonable portions sizes to meet your needs.



Step 2: Focus on carbohydrates.

- Choose the right amount of carbohydrates for you.
- Include high fibre and whole grain carbohydrates.
- Know the proper serving sizes for one serving of carbohydrates. Use nutrition labels and approximate measuring if measuring cups and scales are not available.
- Record the amount of carbohydrates you consume at each meal.

Step 3: Monitor effects on glucose level.

- Work with your health care provider to keep track of your blood glucose levels.



National  
Aboriginal  
Diabetes  
Association | Association  
Nationale  
Autochtone  
du  
Diabète

103 - 90 GARRY STREET  
WINNIPEG MANITOBA  
R3C 4H1  
1-877-232-6232



National  
Aboriginal  
Diabetes  
Association

Association  
Nationale  
Autochtone  
du  
Diabète

Carbohydrate Counting &  
Diabetes  
What you need to know



The National Aboriginal Diabetes  
Association envisions diabetes-free  
healthy communities

[www.nada.ca](http://www.nada.ca)

## What are carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates are a major nutrient found in food and drinks. Carbohydrates are broken down into glucose (sugar) and these are the main source of energy for our body to use. Other names for 'carbohydrates' are: Fibre, starch, and sugar.

- Fibre helps to control blood glucose. Choose foods that are whole grain or contain more than 4g of fibre.

## Foods that contain carbohydrates:

- Grains (rice, bannock, pasta)
- Starchy vegetables (potatoes, yams, artichoke, corn, squash)
- Fruit (cherries, berries, plums, bananas)
- Jams, maple syrup

You should visit your dentist if you experience any of these symptoms; urgent treatment might be required to prevent a problem from worsening.

## Carbohydrates and diabetes

Carbohydrates are the main contributor to raising blood glucose (sugar) levels. Our body can store fat and protein, but carbohydrates cannot be stored for very long, so a lot of the carbs we eat are broken down into glucose and stay in our blood, causing our blood glucose levels to rise.



## How many carbohydrates should you eat?

- Women: 45-60g carbs per meal and 15-30g carbs per snack.
- Men: 60-75g carbs per meal and 15-30g per snack.
- One serving of carbohydrates is about 15g... so for each meal you can choose about 4 servings of carbohydrates.

Here are some examples of foods that are one serving (15g) of carbohydrates:

Food Item	Serving Size
Bannock	1.5 x 2.5 inch piece
Rice (brown and white, long grain, cooked)	1/3 cup (75mL)
Barley, quinoa, couscous, whole grain pasta (cooked)	1/2 cup (125mL)
Saskatoon berry, blueberry, elderberry	1 cup (250mL)
Corn	1/2 cup
Maple syrup	1 Tbsp (15mL)

Along with carbohydrate-containing foods, choose foods low in carbohydrates to meet your other nutrient needs:

Food Item	Serving Size
Carrots, onions, mushrooms	1/2 cup
Salmon, goose, deer, turkey	2.5 oz., 75g
Eggs	1 large
Nuts and seeds	1 Tbsp

## Navigating a food label

Example food: Pasta

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1/4 cup (47g) Dry Wt.	
About 1 cup cooked	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 170 Calories from Fat 10	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Potassium 105mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 37mg	12%
Dietary Fibre 2g	8%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 4mg	
Iron 4%	Thiamine 10%
Niacin 15%	Folate 6%

Serving size matters! This is double the serving size for pasta, so this will count for 2 servings of carbohydrates.

This pasta has about two servings of carbohydrates. The grams of fibre do not count towards your carbohydrates because fibre is good for blood glucose.

## No food label? Quick tips and tricks

Quick guide to help determine serving sizes of foods:

- 1 Tbsp = 1 thumb
- 1/2 cup = 1/2 fist
- 1 cup = 1 fist
- 2.5 oz. = palm of hand

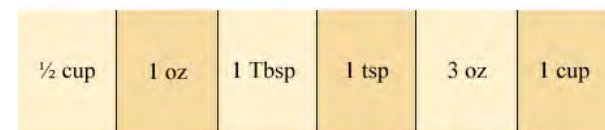


image source: <https://www.webmd.com/diet/serving-size>