

# Diabetes and Healthy Eating

*Easy meal planning tips to help you manage your diabetes*

WHAT YOU EAT AFFECTS YOUR BLOOD SUGARS. Carbohydrate is the main part of food that affects your blood sugar levels. Foods that contain carbohydrate raise your blood sugar. Foods that contain little or no carbohydrate do not affect blood sugar very much.

## FOODS THAT AFFECT BLOOD SUGAR

- Grains & Starches
- Fruits
- Milk & Alternatives
- Sugars & Sweet Foods

## FOODS THAT DO NOT AFFECT BLOOD SUGAR VERY MUCH

- Vegetables
- Meat & Alternatives
- Fats
- Extras

## FOODS THAT CONTAIN CARBOHYDRATE

Each serving from a food that contains carbohydrate from the list below has about 15 g of carbohydrate. At meals, women should try to eat 45-60 g of carbohydrate (3 or 4 choices from the list below) and men 60-75 g (4 or 5 choices from the list below). For snacks, try to eat 0-30 g of carbohydrate (0-2 choices from the list below).

### GRAINS & STARCHES

Choose whole-grains, such as whole-wheat bread and brown rice, to increase your fibre intake. Choose an amount up to the size of your fist at each meal. A portion (15g) is about the size of your fist.

- Bread = 1 slice
- Bun (hamburger, hotdog) = 1/2 bun
- Bannock = the size of 1/2 deck of cards
- Cold cereal = 1/2 cup
- Hot cereal = 3/4 cup
- Potato = 1/2 medium
- Corn = 1/2 cup
- Rice (cooked) = 1/3 cup
- Macaroni, spaghetti noodles (cooked) = 1/2 cup
- Pancake, waffle = 1 (the size of a CD)
- Crackers, soda type = 7
- Muffin = 1/2 small
- Popcorn, low-fat = 3 cups
- Bagel = 1/2 small
- Soup = 1 1/2 cups



### FRUITS

Fruits are high in fibre and a good source of vitamins and minerals. Choose an amount up to the size of your fist at each meal. A portion (15g) is about the size of your fist.

- Apple or Orange = 1 medium (the size of a baseball)
- Banana = 1 small or 1/2 large
- Grapes = 1/2 cup
- Canned fruit, in juice = 1/2 cup
- Unsweetened fruit juice = 1/2 cup
- Dried fruit = 1/4 cup
- Cranberries, strawberries, raspberries = 2 cups
- Blueberries = 1 cup



### SUGAR & SWEET FOODS

These foods are often high in calories and fat and should be eaten only occasionally.

- Sugar, honey, jam, jelly = 1 Tbsp
- Chocolate bar = 1/2 bar
- Chips = 6 chips
- Candy = 2 pieces of licorice, 5 jellybeans
- Cake, unfrosted = the size of 4 dominoes
- Ice cream, regular pop = 1/2 cup
- Fruit punch, fruit beverage, fruit cocktail = 1/2 cup
- Fruit crystals, Kool Aid = 1/2 cup
- Gatorade/Powerade = 1 cup
- Iced tea = 3/4 cup
- Cookies = 2
- Donuts = 1/2
- Pie = 1/8 of pie



### MILK & ALTERNATIVES

Milk and alternatives are excellent sources of calcium and vitamin D, which are important for healthy bones and teeth. Enjoy a glass of milk with a meal.

- Milk (2%, 1%, skim) = 1 cup
- Chocolate milk (1%) = 1/2 cup
- Canned milk (evaporated) = 1/2 cup
- Fortified soy beverage = 1 cup
- Yogourt (flavored, artificially sweetened) = 3/4 cup
- Diet milk pudding = 1/2 cup



# FOODS THAT CONTAIN LITTLE OR NO CARBOHYDRATE

## VEGETABLES

Fresh, frozen, or canned, vegetables are low in carbohydrate, calories, and fat. Eat vegetables freely throughout the day. Choose as much as you can hold in both hands at each meal.

- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Celery
- Cucumber
- Lettuce (salad)
- Beans, green or yellow
- Tomato
- Peas
- Cabbage
- Onions
- Frozen vegetables
- Canned vegetables



## MEAT & ALTERNATIVES

Foods in this group are excellent sources of protein. Choose an amount the size of your palm and the thickness of your little finger.

- Low fat Cheese (<20% MF) = the size of two dominoes
- Cottage cheese (1-2 % MF) = ¼ cup
- Eggs = 1 medium
- Dried or canned beans, such as chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils, split peas, black beans = ½ cup
- Peanut butter = 2 Tbsp
- Beef, chicken, turkey, caribou, deer, elk, duck, moose, fish = the size of a deck of cards



## FATS

Choose unsaturated fats such as olive and canola oils and non-hydrogenated margarines. Limit saturated fat, such as lard, butter, shortening and “hard” margarines. Limit fat to an amount the size of the tip of your thumb at each meal.

- Cream, half & half = 3 Tbsp
- Sour cream = 2 Tbsp
- Olive or canola oil = 1 tsp
- Salad dressing, low-fat = 2 Tbsp
- Salad dressing, regular = 1 tsp
- Mayonnaise, light = 1 Tbsp
- Mayonnaise, regular = 1 tsp
- Margarine, non-hydrogenated = 1 tsp
- Gravy = 2 Tbsp
- Almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds = 1 Tbsp



## EXTRAS

Extras are foods low in carbohydrate and other nutrients. Some extras are so low in carbohydrate that they do not need to be counted. These foods include:

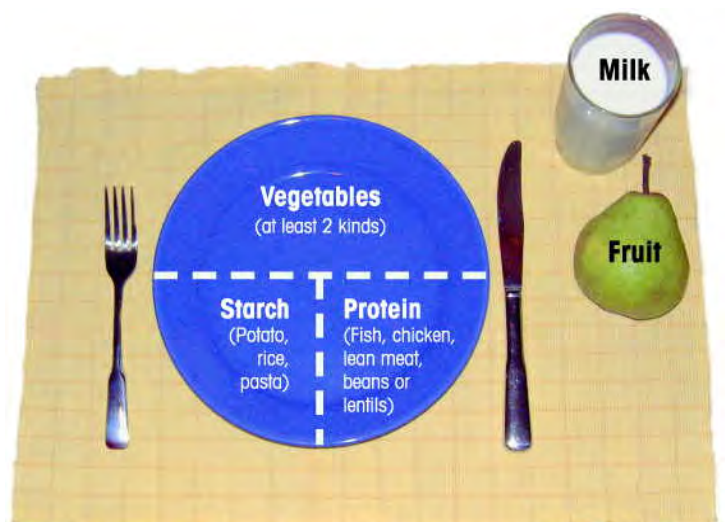
*Water, coffee, tea, diet soft drinks, Crystal Light, Sugar-free Jell-O, Equal, Splenda, herbs and spices, salt, pepper, vinegar, soya sauce, lemon juice, and mustard*

Other foods contain a small amount of carbohydrate:

*No sugar added jam or jelly, ketchup, and salsa*

## Putting it all together...

- \* Fill half of your plate with vegetables
- \* Fill one quarter of your plate with Grains & Starches choices
- \* Fill the other quarter of your plate with food from the Meat & Alternatives group
- \* Enjoy a glass of milk and a piece of fruit with your meal



This handout is not to replace medical advice. Contact your local dietitian or diabetes educator for more information on Diabetes Management. Handout adapted from *Beyond the Basics* and Sanofi Aventis *Health Food Guide for People with Diabetes*. Developed by Dawn Herauf, University of Saskatchewan Nutrition student. [2008]

Available on the Chronic Disease Network and Access Program website at: [www.ehealth-north.sk.ca](http://www.ehealth-north.sk.ca)