

*A healthy diet
is important
for managing
your blood
sugar.*

Diabetes Meal Planning: Getting Started

This information provides tips on how to start making your meal plan healthier. While all foods may affect your blood sugar, carbohydrates (CHOs) may have the biggest impact. A **Consistent Carbohydrate Diet** can help control your blood sugar. This means that you eat the same amount of CHOs at each meal. Your doctor may suggest that a dietitian help you select the number of CHOs that are right for you based on your blood sugar, weight and activity level.

What Are CHOs?

CHOs are the foods we use for energy. Examples of healthy CHOs are:

- Milk (lowfat milk, yogurt)
- Starches (whole grain bread, rice, pasta)
- Fruit (apples, grapes, oranges)
- Starchy vegetables (winter squash, potatoes, corn, peas)

How Can I Create a Healthy Menu?

Basic Guidelines

Here are some basic guidelines that will help you control your blood sugar.

Eat 3 meals a day:

- Plan to eat your meals at about the same time each day.
- Do not skip meals.
- Make sure you eat a variety of foods (fruits, vegetables, etc.)

Know how to snack:

- If you take insulin, be sure to have a bedtime snack.
- If your meals are more than 5 hours apart, have a small snack.
- Snacks ideas: 2 to 3 graham cracker squares with peanut butter; ½ turkey sandwich; or ¼ cup cottage cheese with ½ banana.

Watch portion sizes:

- Even healthy foods will cause high blood sugar if you eat too much.
- Make sure each of your meals has the same amount of CHOs.

Avoid foods high in sugar:

- Some foods to avoid: sugar, honey, candies, syrup, cakes, cookies, regular soda and fruit drinks.

Reach and Maintain a Healthy Body Weight:

- A healthy weight improves blood sugar levels.
- Activity helps your body improve blood sugar levels.
- Excess fat from animal products, including butter, bacon, mayonnaise, cheese and creamy salad dressings, should be avoided. Avoid fried foods.

Know the sugar-free foods that also are very low in calories (less than 20 calories per serving).

These are called “free foods” and have little effect on your blood sugar:

- Diet soda
- No-added-sugar jellies
- Spices
- Coffee
- Sugar-free gelatin
- Sugar-free gum
- Sugar substitutes
- Tea

Note: If you are pregnant, do not use saccharine. All other sugar substitutes (alone or in other foods) should be used in moderation.

Balancing Your Diet

To plan your meals, it is important to know the serving size or the amount of food to eat.

Carbohydrates

See chart on page 6 for examples.

Starch: Include 2 to 3 servings per meal, or 6-11 servings per day.

The following is 1 serving:

- 1 slice of bread, 6-inch tortilla or 4-inch waffle
- ½ English muffin, hot dog or hamburger bun, ½ pita bread
- ¼ bagel
- ¾ oz. pretzels
- ¾ cup unsweetened ready to eat cereal
- 4 to 6 crackers
- 3 cups no-fat-added popcorn
- ½ cup cooked cereal or bulgur, cooked beans or peas, potato, sweet potato or yam
- ⅓ cup cooked pasta or rice
- 1 small baked potato (3 oz.)

Fruits: Include 1 with each meal, or 2 to 4 per day.

The following is 1 serving:

- 1 small fresh fruit
- ½ banana
- ½ cup applesauce
- ½ cup canned fruit in its own juice
- ¼ cup dried fruit or 2 tablespoons raisins
- 17 small grapes
- ½ cup unsweetened fruit juice
- 1 cup cantaloupe or honeydew melon, or raspberries
- 1¼ cup whole strawberries
- ¾ cup blueberries or blackberries

Milk: Include 1 serving with each meal, or 2 to 3 servings per day or 3 to 4 servings if you are pregnant.

The following is 1 serving:

- 1 cup milk (soy, fat free, low fat, reduced fat or whole)
- ¾ cup plain, sugar-free yogurt

Other Food Groups

Nonstarchy Vegetables

See chart on page 7 for examples.

Include 1 to 2 servings per meal, or 3 to 5 servings per day.

The following is 1 serving:

- 1 cup raw vegetables
- ½ cup cooked vegetables, tomato juice or vegetable juice

Meat and Meat Substitutes

Include 4 to 6 ounces per day, or 6 to 8 oz. if you are pregnant.

The following is 1 serving:

- 1 oz. cooked chicken, turkey, fish, beef, pork, lamb
- 1 slice cheese
- ¼ cup cottage cheese
- ½ cup tofu
- 1 Tbsp. peanut butter
- 1 egg

Note: If you are pregnant, be sure to heat all deli-type meats before eating. This will help prevent an infection due to listeria, which may cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, or infection of the newborn.

Fats

Limit to 3 to 5 servings a day.

The following is 1 serving:

- 1 tsp. margarine, butter, mayonnaise or oil
- 1 Tbsp. reduced fat margarine, reduced fat mayonnaise, salad dressing, cream cheese, half-and-half cream or seeds (sesame, pumpkin, sunflower)
- 1 Tbsp. nuts
- 1½ Tbsp. reduced fat cream cheese
- 2 Tbsp. fat-free salad dressing, sour cream
- 1 slice bacon
- ⅛ avocado

A Menu Example:

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
½ cup oatmeal	2 slices whole wheat bread	3 oz. baked chicken	3 cups air-popped popcorn
½ banana	2 oz. sliced turkey	⅔ cup brown rice	8 oz. sugar-free hot cocoa
1 cup skim milk	1 Tbsp. reduced calorie mayonnaise	½ cup cooked broccoli	
1 Tbsp. peanut butter	1 cup carrot sticks	1 cup salad	
	1 small apple	1 Tbsp. salad dressing	
		1 cup raspberries	

These are general guidelines. To tailor your diet to your specific needs, arrange to meet with an outpatient dietitian by calling, Northwestern Memorial's Wellness Institute can assist you to arrange a personalized consultation at 312-926-WELL (9355).

To control your blood sugar is it is also important to:

- Take medicines as prescribed
- Do routine blood sugar checks
- Exercise
- Follow your doctor's guidelines

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

Servings for Carbohydrate Foods

Carbohydrates (CHO)			
<i>Each serving shown below = 15 grams carbohydrate:</i>			
Starch	Other Starches and Sugars	Fruit	Milk
1 slice bread 6 inch tortilla ½ English muffin, hamburger/hotdog small pita (1 oz.) ¼ bagel (1 oz.) 1 waffle or pancake (4 inch diameter, ¼ thick) ¾ cup unsweetened, dry cereal ½ cup sweetened bran cereal ½ cup cooked cereal (oatmeal, grits, kashi, bulgar) ⅓ cup cooked pasta, rice, couscous 4-6 crackers ¾ oz. (15-20) pretzels, snack chips (fat-free, baked) 3 cups light popcorn 3 Tbsp flour (dry) ¾ large baked potato (3 oz) ½ cup corn, green peas; cooked beans, peas, lentils ½ cup potato, sweet potato ⅓ cup baked beans, refried beans	½ cup casserole/ lasagna/macaroni and cheese/ spaghetti with meat sauce 1 cup broth-based soup ½ cup cream-based soup or chili 1 Tbsp sugar/syrup/ jam/jelly/honey 2 Tbsp light syrup 2 inch square cake or brownie, unfrosted 2 small cookies ½ cup ice cream/ gelatin/frozen yogurt ¾ cup pudding/ sherbet/sorbet ½ cup sugar free pudding	1 small fresh fruit (tennis ball size) ½ cup unsweetened applesauce ½ cup canned fruit in own juice or water ½ banana (4 inch length) ¾ cup blueberries/ blackberries 1¼ cup strawberries ⅓ cantaloupe or honeydew (1 cup cut) 1 wedge watermelon (1 inch thick) 17 medium grapes ½ small papaya ½ grapefruit (large) 2 Tbsp raisins or “craisins” ¼ cup dried fruit pieces 3 dried plums/ dates/figs ½ cup unsweetened juice ⅓ cup prune, grape or cranberry juice	1 cup fat free or reduced fat milk 1 cup unsweetened soy milk 1 cup buttermilk 1 cup Lactaid™ milk 1 cup kefir 1 cup plain yogurt 6 oz. light or fat free yogurt

Servings for Other Food Groups

Non-starchy Vegetables	Protein	Fats
<p>½ cup cooked vegetables 1 cup raw vegetables ½ cup tomato or vegetable juice See shopping guide for list of non-starchy vegetables. <i>1 serving = 5 grams CHO</i></p>	<p>1 oz lean meat, fish, poultry, or shellfish ¼ cup low-fat cottage cheese/ 1 oz low-fat cheese 1 egg or ¼ cup egg substitute ¼ cup nuts/1 Tbsp peanut butter ½ cup tofu <i>1 serving = 7 grams protein</i></p>	<p>1 tsp margarine/butter/oil 1 Tbsp reduced fat margarine/butter/mayo/cream cheese 2 Tbsp reduced fat sour cream/salad dressing/half an half ¼ cup avocado 1 Tbsp nuts (6-7 nuts) 10 olives 1 Tbsp sesame/sunflower seeds <i>1 serving = 5 grams of fat</i></p>
Free Foods (less than 20 calories)		Foods to Limit to 3 Servings per Day
<p>Coffee or tea (unsweetened, no cream or milk) Sugar substitutes Diet soft drinks, club soda, diet tonic water, sugar-free mineral water, sparkling water, Low sodium bouillon and broth Lemon and lime juice Herbs and spices Mustard Low sodium soy sauce Vinegar Cooking wine Worcestershire sauce Raw cabbage, celery, radishes, green onions, zucchini, mushrooms, lettuce, cucumbers Salsa Sugar-free gelatin, popsicles and gum Fat-free whipped topping</p>		<p>Fat-free cream cheese Nondairy creamer Fat-free mayonnaise Fat-free margarine Fat-free salad dressing Fat-free or reduced fat sour cream Regular or light whipped topping Sugar-free hard candy Low sugar or light jam or jelly Sugar-free syrup Unsweetened cocoa powder Catsup Pickles Taco sauce Diet V8™ “Splash” drink</p>

Northwestern Memorial is an equal opportunity employer that welcomes, respects and serves with dignity all people and does not discriminate, including in hiring, or employment, or admission, or access to, or treatment in its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, disability, handicap, age, Vietnam or other veteran status, sexual orientation or any other status protected by relevant law. To arrange for TDD/TTY, auxiliary aids and foreign language interpretation services, call the Patient Representative department at 312-926-3112, TDD number 312-944-2358. Issues related to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 should be directed to the director of Employee Relations or designee at 312-926-7297.

Developed by: Clinical Nutrition, Wellness Institute with Medicine Nursing

© September 2007. Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

1100-07

900837 (09/07)