

Basic Guidelines for Healthy Eating with Diabetes

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Diet is the cornerstone of your diabetes treatment plan. Your Registered Dietitian will teach you a meal plan tailored to your health needs and lifestyle. Until then, here are the basic components of a healthy diet.

1. **Eat meals at regular times.**
 - Regular meal times can help you control your blood glucose levels as well as prevent getting overly hungry and then overeating later in the day.
2. **Use less fat, sugar and salt.**
 - Choosing foods lower in fat can help you lose weight. Limit animal fats, such as butter, lard, and cream, which can increase your risk of heart disease.
 - Foods high in sugar are usually low in nutritional value. Even small amounts of sugar and sweets can raise blood glucose levels after meals.
 - Cutting back on salt and high sodium foods can help improve your blood pressure.
3. **Choose foods high in fiber.**
 - Eat plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans.
 - Fiber can help improve cholesterol levels, keep you feeling satisfied after meals, and smooth out blood glucose levels.
4. **Count your carbohydrates.**
 - Carbohydrates (“carbs”) in your food raise your blood glucose levels. It is important to learn which foods contain carbs and how many you should eat with every meal.
 - Talk with your dietitian about a healthy amount for you.
5. **Watch your portions**
 - a. Portion control will help you lose weight, as well as manage your blood glucose levels.
 - b. Use the Plate Method (see picture below)
 - Visualize half of your plate filled with nonstarchy vegetables, such as green beans, broccoli or a salad.
 - Imagine $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with a whole grain or starchy vegetable, for example a slice of whole wheat bread or a small potato.
 - Include lean meat, like chicken or fish on the other $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate.
 - Add a small piece of fresh fruit, and a glass of non-fat milk.
 - You’ve got a complete and nutritious meal!

Plate Method

