

## Healthy Eating to Control Type 2 Diabetes

### LIFESTYLE FACTORS TO IMPROVE BLOOD SUGAR CONTROL:

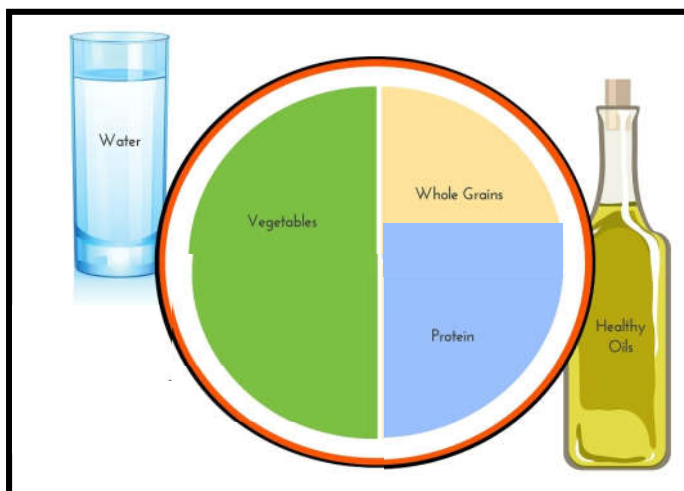
- **Aim for a healthy weight.** If you are overweight/obese, work on reducing your weight. Losing as little as 7-10% of body weight can significantly improve diabetes.
- **Do at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. Include moderate physical activity (such as brisk walking) for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.** Regular activity also helps to control blood sugar, improve your heart health, and increase weight loss. If your health care provider advises, emphasize short intervals of intense cardiovascular activity as this is especially helpful.
- **Control your portions of foods containing carbohydrates while consuming a balanced fiber-rich diet.** Carbohydrates (found in grains, fruits, sweets, starchy vegetables, dairy, and beans) raise blood sugar. All carbs, whether whole or refined, raise blood sugar. Having adequate fiber and healthy fats (i.e. nuts, avocado, olive oil, etc.) in your meals helps to slow down how quickly your blood sugar rises after eating.

### HEALTHY DIABETIC DIET

A diabetes diet is a healthy eating plan rich in non-starchy vegetables and lean proteins, moderate in whole food carbohydrates, and low in refined grains, sweets, saturated fats (found mostly in meat and creamy dairy) and calories.

#### Healthy diabetic plate

- **A healthy diabetic meal is ½ non-starchy vegetables.** Try filling up first on non-starchy vegetables (salad, broccoli, spinach, green beans, etc.) to help you control your carbohydrate portions.
- **Include an adequate portion of lean protein** (skinless chicken, fish, lean meat, beans, etc.).
- **Limit the carbohydrate portion of the meal to no more than ¼<sup>th</sup> of your plate.** Take stock of the carbohydrate sources in a meal and confine these to no more than a fourth of your plate. Choose whole-grain sources of carbohydrates such as brown rice, whole-grain pasta, and whole-grain bread (See reverse for details on which foods contain carbohydrates) to slow down how quickly you digest your carbs. Look at “total carbohydrates” on the Nutrition Facts Label to assess how much a food will contribute to your carb intake and subsequent blood sugar increase.



#### Additional Dietary Tips

- **Spread your intake throughout** the day by eating 3 regular meals as well as 1-3 snacks if desired. Spacing out your intake helps to prevent blood sugar spikes.
- **Consume a healthy breakfast each day.** If you are used to skipping breakfast, try including a small morning meal that contains some lean protein such as nonfat/low fat yogurt or milk or egg whites.
- **Choose fiber-rich foods** to slow down digestion of carbohydrates and prevent sugar spikes. Fiber intake also helps to control blood cholesterol, fullness, and regularity. Aim for 25-35 grams of fiber each day. Foods high in fiber include vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grain products, and nuts.
- **Eat heart-healthy fish at least twice a week.** Fish such as salmon, tuna, mackerel, and herring are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which promote heart health by improving inflammation, blood pressure, and triglyceride levels in the blood.

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FOODS THAT CONTAIN CARBOHYDRATES		
Food	Examples	Notes
<b>Grains</b>	Bread, rice, pasta, cereal, oatmeal, crackers, baked goods	-Opt for high fiber whole-grain options because these raise sugar more slowly and contain healthy nutrients. -While whole-grain options are healthier, they have similar carbohydrate content as white/refined products so still control portions.
<b>Fruits</b>	Apples, pears, oranges, bananas, melons, berries, etc.	-Opt for fresh or frozen instead of higher carbohydrate fruit juices, jams, and dried fruits. Berries are especially healthy lower-carbohydrate fruits. -All kinds of fresh fruits are good choices as long as you do not overdo the portions. Try to limit yourself to 1 cup of fruit at a time.
<b>Starchy vegetables</b>	Corn, sweet peas, potato, yam, plantain, yucca, cassava, winter squash	-These are digested quickly so be particularly aware of your portions.
<b>Sweets &amp; sweetened drinks</b>	Anything sweetened with calorie-containing sweeteners including sugar, honey, and juice concentrate.	-These are usually low in healthy nutrients and high in unhealthy fats and/or sugars, so limit your intake. Slowly savor small portions. -Instead of juice and sweetened drinks use water, seltzer, or diet drinks such as diet soda, flavored waters, and flavoring packets -“Sugar-free” products are not necessarily low in dietary sugars and carbs. Always look at the labels to see how
<b>Alcohol &amp; sweetened alcoholic beverages</b>	Beer, wine, spirits, cocktails	-Alcohol is high in calories and does not have a lot of nutritional value. -Alcohol can influence blood sugar in unpredictable ways and increase blood pressure, so it is especially important for diabetics to consume it in moderation and take it with food. -Beer has more carbohydrates than wine.
<b>Beans</b>	Pigeon peas, lentils, chickpeas, and other types of beans.	-Beans are a combination of carbohydrate and protein so they are lower in carbohydrate than grains and a great substitution for rice or pasta. -Beans are a great source of fiber and healthy minerals.
<b>Dairy</b>	Milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream, ricotta	-Always choose low fat/nonfat dairy because full-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, and cream are high in unhealthy fats. -Milk, yogurt, and sweetened dairy products like ice cream and flavored yogurts contain significant carbohydrates. - Low fat/nonfat Greek (strained) yogurt, cottage cheese, and cheese are good protein sources that are low in carbohydrate.

## EVALUATING BLOOD SUGAR

- **If you are testing your blood sugar, follow your health provider’s instructions about when and how often to check sugar. Each individual has different testing needs and blood sugar targets.**
- **The following are general blood sugar targets:**
  - Before meals: 90 to 130 mg/dL (preferably around 100 mg/dL)
  - Two hours after meals: Less than 180 mg/dL (preferably less than 130 mg/dL)
- **To monitor the general status of your blood sugar control, check your waking fasting sugar each day.**
- **To understand how different foods and portions influence your blood sugar, test your sugar before and 2 hours after your meal start.** If you find your blood sugar is substantially higher (for example you might aim for the meal to raise sugar no more than 50 mg/dL), think about the carbohydrate content of the meal and your portion sizes. Next time, try replacing some of the carbohydrate with non-starchy vegetables or lean protein.