

Best Foods To Eat And Avoid With Diabetes



What foods can I eat ?

Do not worry that you will not be able to enjoy your foods if you have diabetes. The good news is that you can still eat your favorite foods, but you might need to eat smaller portions or enjoy them less often.

The key to eating with diabetes is to eat a variety of healthy foods from all food groups, in the amounts your meal plan outlines.

The food groups are



Vegetables

Non-starchy: includes broccoli, carrots, greens, peppers, and tomatoes.

Starchy: includes potatoes, corn, and green peas.



Fruits

Includes oranges, melon, berries, apples, bananas, and grapes.



Grains

At least half of your grains for the day should be whole grains includes wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, and quinoa.

Examples: bread, pasta, cereal, and tortillas



Proteins

Includes lean meat, chicken without the skin, fish, eggs, nuts and peanuts, dried beans and certain peas, such as chickpeas & split peas, meat substitutes, such as tofu.



Dairy

Includes non-fat or low-fat, milk or lactose-free milk if you have lactose intolerance, yogurt, cheese.¹⁻³

What foods to avoid?



Foods and drinks to limit include

- Fried foods and other foods high in saturated fat and trans fat
- Foods high in salt, also called sodium
- Sweets, such as baked goods, candy, and ice cream
- Beverages with added sugars, such as juice, regular soda, and regular sports or energy drinks

Drink water instead of sweetened beverages. Use a sugar substitute in your coffee or tea. If you drink alcohol, drink moderately-no more than one drink a day if you are a woman or two drinks a day if you are a man.¹

When to eat and how much to eat?

Some people with diabetes need to eat at about the same time each day. Others can be more flexible with the timing of their meals. Depending on your diabetes medicines or type of insulin, you may need to eat the same amount of carbohydrates at the same time each day.

Eating the right amount of food will also help you manage your blood glucose level and your weight.¹



Food exchange list for Diabetics

The exchange list is a tool to help you plan healthy meals and snacks. To add variety to your diet, you can substitute certain foods for other foods in the same group. Some examples are listed here.⁴

Food group	You can have	Or exchange it for
Fruit (each serving contains about 15 grams carbohydrates)	1 small or medium piece of fresh fruit	1/2 cup fruit juice, or canned or chopped fruit
Vegetable (each serving contains about 5 grams carbohydrates)	1 cup raw vegetables	1/2 cup cooked vegetables or vegetable juice
Starch (each serving contains about 15 grams carbohydrates)	1 slice or ounce bread	1/2 cup pasta, cereal, starchy vegetable
Sugar, honey, molasses	1 teaspoon	4 grams carbohydrates
Milk (does not include cream, yogurt or cheese)	1 cup of cow's milk (low-fat)	12 grams carbohydrates and 8 grams protein
Meat	1 ounce meat, fish, poultry, cheese or yogurt	1/2 cup dried beans
Fat (includes nuts, seeds and small amounts of bacon and peanut butter)	1 teaspoon oil, butter or margarine	5 grams fat

References: 1. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/diet-eating-physical-activity>, 2. <https://www.diabetes.org/healthy-living/recipes-nutrition> 3. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diabetes/in-depth/diabetes-diet/art-20044295> 4. <https://familydoctor.org/diabetes-and-nutrition/>