

Diabetes: Food for thought

Healthy eating for diabetes follows the same healthy eating guidelines as recommended for everyone. You and your whole family can eat the same healthy meals.

Eating healthily can reduce the risk of you and your family members getting diabetes.

The traditional diets of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is very healthy. It is low in fat, especially unhealthy fat, and based on lean meat and fish, plenty of vegetables, fruit and unprocessed foods. Trying to choose foods that match this will help manage your diabetes.

Your intake of carbohydrate foods and fat is important in the management of diabetes.

Carbohydrate foods

- Carbohydrate foods are the best energy source for the body.
- Choose healthy carbohydrate foods to have at each meal and snack.
- Carbohydrate foods are broken down into glucose.
- Too many carbohydrates at

one time may cause high blood glucose levels.

- Not enough carbohydrates at a meal, or over the whole day, may:
 - Make you feel tired.
 - Make you miss out on important vitamins and minerals.
 - Cause a low blood glucose level (or hypo).

Healthy carbohydrate foods include:

- Bread and breakfast cereals – choose wholegrain options
- Rice and pasta (choose wholemeal pasta)
- Potato, sweet potato, taro and corn
- Legumes such as baked beans, lentils, kidney beans and split peas
- Fruit
- Milk and yoghurt – choose low fat

Fats

- Fats do not raise blood glucose levels.
- Fats eaten in excess can cause weight gain, making diabetes more difficult to manage.
- There are healthy and unhealthy fats.

Healthy eating can be achieved by making just a few small changes. The following hints and tips will help you eat a healthy diet for diabetes.



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Unhealthy fats	Healthy fats
Saturated and trans fats raise cholesterol levels and are found in:	Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats lower cholesterol and are found in:
Fatty meat, chicken skin Full fat dairy foods Fatty snacks e.g. chocolate, potato crisps, biscuits, pastries Fried take away foods Food made with palm oil or coconut products Coconut milk	Canola and olive oils and margarines Seed oils and margarines eg. sunflower, sesame or safflower oil Nuts Avocado Fish

Eat less fat, especially saturated fat

- Use less butter, try a scrape of margarine instead
- Avoid fried and takeaway foods
- Trim the fat off meat and take the skin off chicken
- Eat less fatty snacks like potato crisps and biscuits
- Use low fat milk, yoghurt, cheese and ice cream

Eat more fruit and vegetables

- Aim for two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables daily
 - Fruit serve – one medium sized piece, two small pieces or 1 cup canned fruit (in natural juice)
 - Vegetable serve – ½ cup cooked vegetables, 1 cup salad or one medium sized potato
- Try to eat fruit or vegetables at each meal
- Snack on fruit during the day

Eat grainy breads and cereals

- Try to eat multigrain or wholemeal bread instead of white
- Eat high fibre cereals like wheat biscuits, porridge or bran cereals
- Eat some bread or cereal or pasta or noodles or damper or rice with each meal

Eat less sugar

- Drink diet cordial or diet soft drink – avoid regular sweet drinks
- Don't eat chocolate, lollies, biscuits or cakes every day

Drink plenty of water

Eat regular meals

- Try to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner everyday
- If you are on certain diabetes tablets or insulin you may need snacks between your meals – ask your doctor

Reading food labels

What to look for?

Look at the '100 gram' column on the nutrition label to compare foods.

Fat: Pick the foods that are lower in fat, especially saturated fat.

Sugar: If sugar (glucose, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, maltose, honey) is first on the ingredient list then the product may not be the best choice. Some sugar in healthy foods is ok if written later in the list.

Fibre: Pick the foods that have the most fibre. Aim for 5g/100g or higher for bread and breakfast cereal.

Sodium (salt): Pick the foods with the lowest sodium. Products that say 'Salt-Reduced' or 'No Added Salt' will often be a good choice.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

SERVINGS PER PACKAGE: 24
SERVING SIZE: 30g

	Per Serve	100 g
Energy	447kJ	1490kJ
Protein	3.5	11.7
Fat, total	0.4g	1.4g
– saturated	0.1g	0.3g
Carbohydrate		
– total	20.3	67.7g
– sugars	1.3g	4.3g
Fibre	3.1g	10.3g
Sodium	89mg	297mg

Ingredients: Whole grain wheat (96%), sugar, salt, barley malt extract, minerals (zinc, iron), vitamins (niacin, thiamine, riboflavin, folate)

Healthy Shopping List

Try these:

Instead of:

Plain water is the best drink. For a change try diet or low-joule cordials
One small glass of fruit juice a day is ok

Sweet drinks

Soft drink, cordials, fruit juices in large amounts

Fresh fruit
Small amounts of: No added sugar gum , Sugar free lollies

Lollies and chocolates

Sweet lollies, mints, chewing gum, chocolates, health bars

Scones, wholegrain or fruit bread, low fat crackers

Cakes

Cakes, pastries, doughnuts

Poly or monounsaturated margarine like olive, canola or sunflower

Butter

Low fat or skim milk
Powdered skim milk (made according to instructions)

Full cream milk

Lean meat like leg ham, kangaroo, chicken breast, (trim fat off meat before cooking), canned salmon or tuna in springwater
Reduced fat mince, kangaroo mince

Sausages, bacon, devon, fatty meats

Low fat cheese slices
Small amounts of reduced fat cheese

Full fat cheese

Sushi, toasted sandwich, lean meat roll or a wrap with lots of salad

Pastries, pies, high fat takeaways (Don't eat everyday)

Raw vegetables, plain popcorn, low fat crackers, rice cakes

Chips, corn chips and crisps

Foods that are grilled, baked, steamed, microwaved or cooked in a non-stick pan
Small amounts of canola, sunflower or olive oil are ok
Try spray oil

Fried foods

Fruit bread or toast
Low fat fruit filled biscuits: Snackright® Sultana Fruit Slice, Weight Watchers® Fruit Slice 97% fat free,

Sweet biscuits

Cream biscuits, chocolate biscuits

Fresh fruit
Low fat yoghurt
Low fat ice cream
Canned fruit in natural juice

Desserts

Fruit pies, puddings, ice cream, cakes

An Example Meal Plan

BREAKFAST

Choose from:

- ½ cup high fibre breakfast cereal with ½–1 cup low fat milk and a serve of fruit
- OR
- 2 slices bread or toast (multigrain is better) with ½ cup baked beans, tomato/mushrooms.
For something different try scrambled, poached or boiled eggs* on your toast
- OR
- 1–2 slices bread or toast (multigrain is better) with a scrape of jam, honey, vegemite or margarine, and a serve of fruit

* Limit eggs to 3–4 per week

LUNCH

Choose from:

- 2 slices bread or 1 bread roll (multigrain is better) with salad and a small serve of lean meat, skinless chicken, canned fish in springwater or low fat cheese
- AND
- Fruit or 100-200g low fat yoghurt

DINNER

Choose from:

- Small amount of lean meat, chicken or fish (no bigger than the size of your palm)
- AND
- ½ cup cooked rice or ½ cup cooked pasta or 1–2 slices bread (multigrain is better) or 1–2 medium potatoes or ½ cup corn/sweet potato/taro
- AND
- Lots of salad or vegetables
- AND
- ½ cup canned fruit (in natural juice) and a dollop of low fat yoghurt or low fat custard

SNACKS Try fruit or 200g low fat yoghurt or plain popcorn or low fat crackers with healthy topping (e.g. tomato) or a slice of multigrain bread/toast or fruit bread/toast.



"Hands on Country"

This painting was created for Australian Diabetes Council by artist Chris Tobin, a Dharug man, and a traditional custodian in the Blue Mountains region. In the artist's words: "The central part of this painting represents the relationship of the clan – it's a unity of people looking out for each other while living independent lives."

Need more information?
Call our customer care line on

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