Healthy choices

Recipes for people with diabetes

Excellus | Everybody Benefits

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Meal planning

In spite of what you might have heard, having diabetes does not mean you have to give up all the foods you enjoy. However, learning to eat healthy, satisfying meals is an important part of your treatment.

Good meal planning includes:

- Speaking with a Registered Dietitian or Diabetes Educator.
- Understanding the importance of certain foods, portion sizes and meal times.
- Choosing healthy foods.

Choose healthy food

Good nutrition is a very important part of diabetes management.

- Eat lots of vegetables and some fruit.
- Choose whole grain foods instead of processed grains.
- Include fish and lean meats like chicken and turkey without the skin.
- Include dried beans (like kidney or pinto beans) and lentils in your meals.
- Choose low-fat dairy products such as milk, yogurt and cheese (1 percent fat or less).
- Choose liquid oils such as canola, olive or peanut oil for cooking.
- Choose fruit that is in-season for dessert.
- Choose water to drink.
- Control your portion sizes.

For more recipes, please visit diabetesfoodhub.org

Understanding how different foods and amounts affect blood sugar

Starches and sugars (carbohydrates) have more effect on blood sugar than protein or fat. Carbohydrates include foods such as bread, pasta, cereal, beans, milk, fruit and fruit juices, and sweets. Keeping track of the carbohydrate foods you eat is a key factor in controlling your blood sugar. Carbohydrates have the greatest impact on your blood sugar after meals, and your blood sugar level can go too high when you eat more carbohydrates than your body can use. By keeping track of the carbohydrates you eat and spreading them throughout the day, you can help control your blood sugar.

In order to count carbohydrates, it's helpful to have a meal plan and know the average carbohydrate values of various food groups.

Talk to your healthcare provider, dietitian or diabetes educator about how many carbohydrates you should have at each meal.

Most of the carbohydrates we eat come from three food groups: starch, fruit and milk. Vegetables also contain some carbohydrates, but foods in the meat and fat groups contain very little carbohydrates. The total amount of carbohydrates in a food affects blood sugar levels more than does the source of carbohydrates or whether the source is a starch or sugar.

This list shows the average amount of carbohydrates in each food group per serving:

Carbohydrate grams			
Starch	15	Vegetable	5
Fruit	15	Meat	0
Milk	12	Fat	0

To make things easy, many people begin carbohydrate counting by rounding the carbohydrate values:

One serving of milk, starch, or fruit = 15 grams of carbohydrates or one carbohydrate serving.

Three servings of vegetable = 15 grams of carbohydrates. One or two servings of vegetables do not need to be counted (with the exception of starchy vegetables like corn, potatoes, squash). Each meal and snack will contain a total number of grams of carbohydrates.

Counting carbohydrates allows flexibility in your meal plan, but you can't abandon your meal plan and eat as many carbohydrates as you desire. Remember to consult your health care team before making any of the changes discussed here.

The basic facts about diabetes

Diabetes is:

Controllable - Though there is no cure for diabetes, it can be managed by keeping blood sugar levels close to normal. This is done with proper meal planning, exercise and possibly medicines.

Lifelong - Your blood sugar levels should improve with treatment. However, this does not mean that your diabetes has gone away. It just means your blood sugars are in control.

Self-managed - Your healthcare team will advise and support you, but control depends on you. The choices you make help determine what your blood sugar level will be.

Always changing - It is common for your healthcare provider to change your medicine or treatment plan over time because your diabetes changes over time.

Lemon herb turkey

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 1 fresh turkey, 10-12 lbs.
- Salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1 large bunch of fresh thyme
- 1 lemon, halved
- 1 onion, quartered

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a small bowl, mix the olive oil, lemon juice and chopped thyme leaves. Set aside.
3. Wash the turkey inside and out, and pat the outside dry.
4. Place the turkey in a large roasting pan. Salt and pepper the inside of the turkey cavity. Stuff the cavity with the bunch of thyme, halved lemon and quartered onion.
5. Brush the outside of the turkey with the oil mixture and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Tie the legs together with string.
6. Roast the turkey about 2½-3 hours, or until the juices run clear. Remove the turkey to a cutting board and cover with aluminum foil. Let rest 20 minutes.
7. Slice the turkey and serve.

Nutrition facts

Serves 10

Calories	240	Sodium	60mg
Total fat	12g	Total carbohydrates	1.8g
Protein	29g	Dietary fiber	0.5g
Cholesterol	86mg	Sugars	0.4g

Colorful pasta salad

Ingredients

4 oz bow-tie pasta
2 tbsp chopped red bell pepper
2 tbsp chopped orange bell pepper
3 tbsp chopped cucumber
3 tbsp shredded carrots
3 tbsp chopped red onion
⅛ tsp black pepper
⅔ cup light mayonnaise
½ tsp sugar
1 tbsp lemon juice

Directions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Cool.
2. In a large bowl, combine pasta with chopped vegetables.
3. In a small bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Pour over the pasta and vegetables and stir.
4. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour or until ready to serve.

Nutrition facts

Serves 6 / serving size - ½ cup pasta salad

Calories	140	Sodium	180mg
Total fat	6g	Total carbohydrates	19g
Protein	3g	Dietary fiber	1g
Cholesterol	6.0mg	Sugar	3g

Cheesy stuffed mushrooms

Ingredients

- 12 large mushrooms
- 2 tbsp finely chopped red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp finely chopped scallions
- 1 tbsp reduced-fat cream cheese
- 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tbsp plain or seasoned bread crumbs
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Remove stem from mushrooms; chop stems finely. Place mushrooms caps on prepared baking sheet.
3. Coat a medium skillet with cooking spray. Over medium heat, cook chopped mushroom stems, red bell pepper, and scallions 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in cream cheese, parsley, bread crumbs, garlic powder and black pepper and cook 1 to 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Spoon mixture evenly into mushroom caps and spray tops with cooking spray.
5. Cover and bake about 15 minutes, or until caps are tender. Uncover and bake an additional 5-6 minutes, or until tops are brown.

Nutrition facts

Serves 4 / serving size - 3 mushrooms

Calories	40	Sodium	47mg
Total fat	1.0g	Total carbohydrates	5.7g
Protein	3.1g	Dietary fiber	1.1g
Cholesterol	2.0mg	Sugar	2.1g

Parmesan mashed cauliflower

Ingredients

1 head cauliflower, cut into florets
6 tbsp plain non-fat yogurt
¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
½ tsp garlic powder
¼ tsp black pepper
1 tbsp chopped green onions

Directions

1. Place the cauliflower florets in a microwave-safe dish and microwave for about 8 minutes, until the cauliflower is soft. Stir halfway through the cooking time.
2. Place the cauliflower, yogurt, cheese, garlic powder, and pepper in a food processor or blender and blend until smooth.
3. Top with the green onions and serve.

Nutrition facts

Serves 4 / serving size - ½ cup

Calories	60	Sodium	90mg
Total fat	2g	Total carbohydrates	7g
Protein	6g	Dietary fiber	3g
Cholesterol	2mg	Sugar	4g

How to read a nutrition label

Nutrition Facts

1 8 servings per container
Serving size **2/3 cup (55g)**

Amount per serving
2 **Calories** **230**

	% Daily Value*
3 **Total Fat 8g**	**10%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 160mg 4	**7%**
5 **Total Carbohydrate** 37g	**13%**
Dietary Fiber 4g 6	**14%**
7 Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	**20%**
8 **Protein** 3g	
9 Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 200mg	15%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

1. **Serving size:** First, look at the serving size and the number of servings in the package. All the information on this label is based on this serving or portion size. If you eat double the serving, you will consume double the calories, carbohydrate, fat and other nutrients.

2. **Calories:** Calories provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of this food. This gives the total calories per serving. The portion of the total calories that comes from fat is also given. A good rule of thumb is to look for foods that show one-third or fewer of the total calories coming from fat.

3. **Total fat:** This gives the total grams of fat in one serving of that food.

   Unsaturated fat: You can find the amount of unsaturated fat by subtracting the amount of saturated and trans fats from the total fat. Eating more unsaturated fats than saturated fats can help lower blood cholesterol levels. Most unsaturated fats come from plant sources and include canola, vegetable and olive oil.

   Saturated, trans fat and cholesterol: Eating too much fat may increase your risk of certain chronic diseases, such as stroke, and some types of cancers.

4. **Sodium:** This shows the amount of sodium (salt) in one serving. This is important if you are on a low-sodium diet or if you have high blood pressure.

5. **Total carbohydrate:** Includes starches, fiber and sugars. The fiber and sugars are also listed separately to help you make good decisions.

6. **Dietary fiber:** This shows the portion of the total carbohydrate per serving that is fiber. Eating a diet high in dietary fiber promotes healthy bowel function.

7. **Total sugars:** This shows the amount of carbohydrate per serving that comes from sugars. This includes both natural sugar and added sugars. Try to minimize added sugars.

8. **Protein:** This shows the total grams of protein in one serving. Protein is an essential nutrient for growth and health.

9. **Vitamins and minerals:** Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health and help reduce the risk of some diseases and conditions.

Baked balsamic asparagus

Ingredients

1 lb fresh asparagus, trimmed
2 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut a sheet of aluminum foil 18 inches long.
2. Place the asparagus on the foil; drizzle with oil and vinegar then spinkle with salt and pepper.
3. Seal the foil packet and place it on a baking sheet.
4. Bake 12 to 15 minutes, or until the asparagus is tender. Open the packet carefully, and serve.

Nutrition facts

Serves 6 / serving size - about 2 pieces of asparagus

Calories	60	Sodium	100mg
Total fat	4.6g	Total carbohydrates	3.8g
Protein	1.7g	Dietary fiber	1.6g
Cholesterol	0.0mg	Sugar	2.2g

Wild mushroom soup

Ingredients

16 oz assorted mushrooms (white, oyster, cremini, shiitake), sliced
1 onion, diced
1 tsp olive oil
1 stalk celery, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbsp flour
4 cups low sodium chicken or vegetable broth
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
½ cup evaporated milk
1 bay leaf
Sliced mushrooms for garnish

Directions

1. In a soup pot over medium heat, add oil, onion and celery and saute until onions turn clear (about 5 minutes).
2. Add mushrooms and saute until soft and all liquid is evaporated, about 10-12 minutes. Add garlic and saute 1 more minute.
3. Add flour to pot and saute for 2 minutes. Then slowly add broth while stirring.
4. Add bay leaf, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Add evaporated milk and simmer for 1 minute. Remove bay leaf and puree soup with immersion blender or in batches in blender.
6. Garnish with additional sautéed mushrooms if desired.

Nutrition facts

Serves 6 / serving size - 1 cup

Calories	70	Sodium	220mg
Total fat	1g	Total carbohydrates	11g
Protein	7g	Dietary fiber	1g
Cholesterol	5mg	Sugar	6g

Gluten-free chocolate mug cake

Ingredients

1 tbsp gluten-free flour
1 tbsp old-fashioned rolled oats
1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
⅛ tsp baking powder
1 pinch salt
4 packets Truvia
2 ½ tbsp skim milk
1 ½ tsp olive oil
1 tbsp water
⅛ tsp vanilla extract
½ cup raspberries

Directions

1. In a large mug, mix together flour, oats, cocoa powder, baking powder, salt, and Truvia. Add in milk, oil, water, and vanilla. Stir to mix well.
2. Microwave for 1 minute and 30 seconds.
3. Serve with fresh raspberries.

Nutrition facts

Serves 1

Calories	170	Sodium	210mg
Total fat	9g	Total carbohydrates	23g
Protein	5g	Dietary fiber	7g
Cholesterol	0mg	Sugar	6g

Green vegetable egg ‘tortilla’

Ingredients

- 2 stalks green onion, chopped
- 1 cup broccoli, chopped
- ½ cup Roma tomatoes, cubed
- 1 cup spinach, chopped
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 4 eggs, whisked
- ½ cup fat free milk

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. In a large bowl, add green onion, tomato, spinach, salt, garlic powder, oregano, pepper, and smoked paprika. Toss ingredients well to make sure they are coated in spices.
3. Preheat an oven-proof nonstick pan over medium heat. Add vegetables from bowl and saute until ingredients are cooked through (about 2 minutes).
4. Add milk to bowl and whisk in eggs. Add egg mixture to pan and stir to make sure all ingredients are evenly spread.
5. Place pan in middle rack of oven and bake for 10 minutes.
6. Remove from oven and let rest for 1-2 minutes before serving.

Nutrition facts

Serves 4 / serving size - ½ cup

Calories	100	Sodium	340mg
Total fat	5g	Total carbohydrates	7g
Protein	9g	Dietary fiber	1g
Cholesterol	185mg	Sugar	3g

Border burgers

Ingredients

- 1 lb 90% lean ground beef
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 2 bell peppers (red and yellow or green), thinly sliced
- 4 tbsp salsa

Directions

1. Preheat oven to broil. Coat a nonstick broiling pan with cooking spray.
2. Divide beef into 4 patties and broil until no pink remains, or to desired doneness.
3. In a medium nonstick skillet over medium heat, sauté onion and bell peppers until tender, stirring occasionally.
4. Serve hamburgers topped with veggie mixture and salsa.

Nutrition facts

Serves 4 / serving size - 1 burger

Calories	223	Sodium	478mg
Total fat	12g	Total carbohydrates	5.0g
Protein	24g	Dietary fiber	1.5g
Cholesterol	74mg	Sugar	2.2g

Orange and apple bars

Ingredients

1 cup old fashioned oats
1 cup whole wheat flour
¼ cup sugar
½ tsp ground cardamom
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
¼ tsp baking soda
2 egg whites
3 tbsp canola oil
1 orange, zested and juiced
1 ½ cups apple butter

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly spray an 8" square baking dish with non-stick cooking spray.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together oats, flour, sugar, cardamom, nutmeg, and baking soda.
3. In a small bowl, lightly beat the egg whites with a fork. Stir in the oil and 2 tbsp fresh orange juice.
4. Add the egg mixture to the oats mixture, stirring until the combined mixture holds together. Press ¾ of the mixture into the baking dish.
5. In another bowl, whisk together the apple butter with 2 tsp orange zest. Using a rubber scraper, spread the fruit butter mixture over the oatmeal mixture. Sprinkle remaining oatmeal mixture on top.
6. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the top is golden brown. Cool completely before cutting into 24 squares.

Nutrition facts

Serves 24 / serving size - 1 bar

Calories	60	Sodium	20mg
Total fat	2g	Total carbohydrates	10g
Protein	1g	Dietary fiber	1g
Cholesterol	0mg	Sugars	12g

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