

HEALTHY EATING & DIABETES

A healthy eating plan and physical activity are cornerstones for managing diabetes.

Guidelines for healthy eating

✓ **Aim for a healthy weight range**

This is the most important thing you can do to control diabetes. Even a small loss can greatly improve blood glucose levels. Take it steadily: 1-2kg per month is plenty. To lose weight, limit foods high in fat & sugar, limit alcohol & keep your meals small. Regular exercise also helps to control your weight.

✓ **Limit high fat foods**

Foods high in fat can contribute to excess weight. In particular, saturated fats (found mainly in animal products) and trans fats can increase your blood cholesterol level which is a risk factor for heart disease.

✓ **Limit foods high in added sugar or quickly digested sugars**

Although eating sugar doesn't cause diabetes, foods which contain large amounts of added sugar or quickly digested sugars can upset diabetes control and cause weight gain, eg lollies, ordinary soft drinks and cordials, and refined breads and cereals.

✓ **Pace your eating**

Have three small to moderate-sized meals, spread evenly over the day

Include carbohydrate foods such as wholegrain breads & cereals, pasta, Basmati rice, fruit, starchy vegetables (sweet potato, corn), dried beans and lentils, low fat milk and yoghurt at each meal. Some of these foods are digested more slowly than others, and therefore help to control blood glucose levels (see 'Good food choices'). Some people will also need to include small, between-meal snacks, especially if there's a long time between meals. Check with your dietitian.

✓ **Exercise regularly**

Exercise helps control blood glucose levels and your weight. It is a key to good health. Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

✓ **Consult a dietitian**

A dietitian will be able to give you individual advice and education. Learning more about healthy eating will enable you to understand more about the relationship between diabetes and food and give you more confidence. It will also enable you and your family to enjoy a greater variety of good foods.



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Good food choices

Breads and cereals	1 serve =																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 3-5 serves daily ✓ preferably choose wholegrain varieties 	<p>1 slice bread, ½ roll, 1 English muffin, 1 crumpet, 3 large crispbreads, 2 plain biscuits</p> <p>breakfast cereals – eg ¼ cup raw oats, ¾ cup cooked porridge, 1½ Weetbix, 12 Mini-wheats, ¾ cup Guardian, ⅓ cup All-bran</p> <p>¼ cup rice bran, oat bran or barley bran</p> <p>½ cup cooked noodles, spaghetti or macaroni</p> <p>½ cup raw barley or ⅓ cup cooked rice (choose Basmati or Doongara rice), ⅓ cup bulgur (cracked wheat)</p>																					
Vegetables	1 serve =																					
<p>Starchy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ eat in moderation, 1-2 serves daily <p>Non-starchy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ eat plenty ✓ fresh, frozen and canned varieties are suitable ✓ choose the low salt tinned varieties 	<p>1 medium potato, ½ cup sweet potato, ⅓ cup sweet corn (or ½ cob), ½ cup cooked (dried) beans, peas or lentils</p> <p>Serves do not apply for non-starchy vegetables, they are unrestricted:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">asparagus</td> <td style="width: 33%;">beetroot</td> <td style="width: 33%;">broccoli</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cabbage</td> <td>capsicum</td> <td>carrot</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cauliflower</td> <td>celery</td> <td>cucumber</td> </tr> <tr> <td>eggplant</td> <td>green beans</td> <td>lettuce</td> </tr> <tr> <td>mushrooms</td> <td>onions</td> <td>peas</td> </tr> <tr> <td>pumpkin</td> <td>spinach</td> <td>tomato</td> </tr> <tr> <td>turnip</td> <td>zucchini</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	asparagus	beetroot	broccoli	cabbage	capsicum	carrot	cauliflower	celery	cucumber	eggplant	green beans	lettuce	mushrooms	onions	peas	pumpkin	spinach	tomato	turnip	zucchini	
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Fruit	Any fruits are suitable 1 serve =																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ eat in moderation, 2-3 serves, space over the day ✓ fresh, unsweetened canned or dried (not glacé) varieties are OK 	<p>1 apple, 2 apricots, 1 banana, 1 cup berries, 15-20 grapes, 1 orange, 1 peach, 1 pear, 2 slices pineapple, 1 tablespoon sultanas, 6 dried apricot halves, ¾ cup tinned fruit drained, 150ml unsweetened fruit juice (limit to 1 glass / day)</p>																					
Milk products	1 serve =																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 3 - 4 serves daily ✓ preferably use low-fat or skim varieties 	<p>300ml milk – fresh, dried, UHT, 200ml evaporated milk</p> <p>200g yoghurt – plain or fruit</p> <p>300ml buttermilk, soy milk (with added calcium)</p> <p>40g hard cheese, 100g ricotta or cottage cheese</p>																					
Protein foods	1 serve =																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1 serve daily ✓ use non-fat cooking methods eg baking on a rack, boiling, grilling, micro-waving, steaming 	<p>120-150g lean meats such as beef, lamb, pork, rabbit and kangaroo</p> <p>150g poultry without skin – chicken or turkey</p> <p>150g fresh or canned fish, seafood</p> <p>½ cup cooked (dried) peas, beans and lentils</p> <p>2 small eggs</p>																					
Added fat	A small amount																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use small amounts only, around 1 tablespoon per day ✓ Limit frying 	<p>Best choices are polyunsaturated or mono-unsaturated margarines and oils – eg sunflower, sunola, macadamia, canola, olive.</p> <p>Avocados, nuts and seeds are high in mono & polyunsaturated fats, and high in energy (calories or kilojoules). Use in small amounts.</p> <p>Avoid animal fats where possible– eg butter, lard, dripping, Suparfy, cream</p>																					

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Sample Meal Plan

Important: include some *slowly digested carbohydrate food* with each meal. These foods are *in bold* in the menu below. 1 cup = 300ml.

This meal plan describes average amounts of food for a healthy diet. People's food needs, metabolism, and weight vary greatly. It is useful to consult a dietitian to find what quantities are appropriate for you and to work out a personalised plan.

Breakfast

Example 1

1 serve breakfast cereal – with low fat milk (eg $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cooked **porridge** and 1 cup skim **milk** and 1 slice **wholegrain toast** – thinly spread with margarine, vegemite, 100% fruit spread, cottage cheese, tomato.



Example 2

1 fresh **peach** or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup drained no-added sugar canned or stewed fruit, $\frac{1}{2}$ **cup baked beans** and 1 slice **wholegrain toast**.



Tea, coffee, water.

Light meal

Example 1

1 **wholegrain sandwich** or roll filled with 1 slice (30g) lean meat, skinless chicken, fish or fat-reduced cheese and salad and an **apple**.



Example 2

Salad with 1 slice (30g) lean meat, skinless chicken, fish, reduced-fat cheese or 1 egg plus 1 **wholegrain roll**, 2 slices **wholegrain bread** or 2 – 4 **wholegrain crispbreads** and 200g light fruit **yoghurt**.

Tea, coffee, water

Main meal

Example 1

1 bowl homemade vegetable soup made with fat free stock (if desired), 120g lean meat, skinless chicken or fish and 1 cup **sweet potato** or $\frac{2}{3}$ cup Basmati rice and vegetables or salad and 15 - 20 **grapes**.



Example 2

1 cup cooked **pasta** with tomato-based vegetable sauce, with 120g lean beef mince and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low fat **custard** with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup drained, tinned **fruit** in natural juice.

Tea, coffee, water.

The main meal can be either in the middle of the day or in the evening, whichever suits your personal preferences.

Limit snacks. Include them if there is a long period between meals (more than 4 hours). Fruit, wholegrain bread, fruit loaf or crackers with low fat spread or cottage cheese are good choices.

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Checklist	
Suitable alternatives	Limit these foods
✓ no or low added sugar	× high in added sugar
✓ tablet, liquid or powdered artificial sweeteners	× sugar (brown, raw, white), syrups
✓ low joule jam / marmalade, Promite, vegemite, meat / fish paste, 100% fruit spread	× ordinary jam, marmalade, syrups, Nutella
✓ low joule cordial / diet soft drinks plain mineral / soda water pure fruit juice – limit 120ml per day low fat milk, artificially sweetened flavoured milk light beer, dry wines or spirits – limit alcoholic drinks to no more than 2 standard drinks on any day.	× ordinary cordial, ordinary soft drinks, flavoured mineral water – eg Spritz, Lucozade × tonic water, fruit juice drinks × ordinary flavoured milk × alcoholic drinks high in added sugar or calories – eg sweet wine/sherry, port, liqueurs, ordinary beer
✓ sugar free lollies sweetened with Splenda or other sweetener (limit to 2-3 lollies per day) – eg Sugar free Kaiser, Double D, Ricci drops, Lido glace drops.	× confectionary – eg lollies, cough lollies, chocolate (ordinary / diabetic / carob), muesli / health bars eg sesame bars
✓ wholegrain crispbreads / crackers, Shredded Wheatmeal or Milk Arrowroot biscuits, wholemeal low fat scones, fruit loaf	× sweet biscuits – eg cream, chocolate, shortbread × cakes, donuts, iced buns, sweet pastries
✓ low joule jelly, fresh or tinned stewed fruit in natural juice (drained), custard or junket made with sweetener and low fat milk. 'no-added sugar' low fat instant desserts Dairy Bell Lite ice-cream or Vitari 1-2 scoops or light ice-cream 1 scoop. low joule ice cream topping	× sweet desserts – eg ordinary jelly, fruit in sugar, syrup, fruit pies, cheesecake, puddings × ordinary yoghurt or ice cream × ordinary ice-cream toppings
✓ low sugar, low fat, high fibre cereals – eg porridge, Vitabrits, Weetbix, Allbran, Weeties, Guardian, Mini-wheats	× sweet cereals – eg toasted muesli, Nutrigrain, Coco Pops, Honeysmacks, Sugar Frosties
✓ no or low fat	× high in fat, especially “bad” fat (saturated or trans)
✓ low fat mayonnaise, low joule dressings, vinegar, lemon juice, low joule Gravox, plain yoghurt, fish / soy sauces, homemade stock	× ordinary mayonnaise, oily dressings, cream sauces, fatty gravies, sour cream
✓ reduced fat cheese, ricotta / cottage cheese	× full fat cheese
✓ lean cuts of meat – eg ham, beef, chicken or turkey breast trim off fat, remove chicken skin.	× fat on meat, duck and chicken skin. fatty meats – eg sausages, bacon, salami, fritz
✓ foods cooked without fat, or with a minimal amount of poly/mono-unsaturated vegetable oil eg grilled fish, rotisserie chicken (no skin)	× deep-fried / battered foods, fried dim sims, spring rolls, pies / pasties
✓ fruit or vegetables plain popcorn, low salt pretzels, rice crackers	× crisps, hot chips, prawn crackers
✓ limit to 1 tablespoon margarine / oil per day, preferably poly- or mono-unsaturated. Choose margarines with less than 1g trans fat per 100g. ✓ limit nuts or seeds or peanut paste to 30g or use in cooking occasionally	× butter, palm oil, cream, dripping, lard, ghee, coconut cream / milk