

Quick Carbohydrate Guide



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Second edition

Developed by Allina Health.

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For specific information about your health condition, please contact your health care provider.



My Meal Plan

First meal:

_____ carbohydrate choices or _____ grams of carbohydrate

carbohydrate: _____

vegetable: _____

meat/meat substitute: _____

fat: _____

Snack:

_____ carbohydrate choices or _____ grams of carbohydrate

Second meal:

_____ carbohydrate choices or _____ grams of carbohydrate

carbohydrate: _____

vegetable: _____

meat/meat substitute: _____

fat: _____

Snack:

_____ carbohydrate choices or _____ grams of carbohydrate

Third meal:

_____ carbohydrate choices or _____ grams of carbohydrate

carbohydrate: _____

vegetable: _____

meat/meat substitute: _____

fat: _____

Snack:

_____ carbohydrate choices or _____ grams of carbohydrate

Understanding How Food Affects Your Body

Tip

Choose carbohydrate foods that are high in fiber, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables and legumes (navy, kidney and black beans, lentils, etc.). Fiber:

- slows digestion to make you feel fuller longer
- slows the rate carbohydrates are absorbed into your bloodstream
- helps reduce cholesterol by binding to the cholesterol in your digestive tract and getting rid of it.

Important

It is not healthy to leave out carbohydrate foods while you try to lose weight and control your blood glucose level.

You can make a difference in your blood glucose control through your food choices. When you have diabetes, your body may have problems using the energy from the food you eat. This can cause high blood glucose levels. Balancing what, when and how much you eat will help manage your blood glucose levels.

All food affects blood glucose levels. Carbohydrates turn into glucose. There are no good or bad foods. Eating a variety of foods can improve your health and keep mealtimes interesting.

The foods you eat fall into three main groups:

- **Protein:** Protein helps build body cells for growth and healing. Some examples of protein include meat, poultry, fish and eggs.
- **Fat:** Fat helps the body absorb certain vitamins, lubricates joints and muscles, and adds flavor to food. Some examples of fat are mayonnaise, butter, margarine, oils, nuts and salad dressing.
- **Carbohydrate:** Carbohydrates are your best energy source.

Carbohydrate foods are starches (breads, crackers, cereals, rice, pasta, beans, etc.), fruit and fruit juice, milk, starchy vegetables (potatoes, squash, sweet potatoes, corn, etc.) and sweets.

Do not avoid carbohydrate foods. They should make up 50 to 60 percent of your food plan.

Carbohydrate counting is a way to help you manage the amount of carbohydrate you eat during the day.

A carbohydrate choice is a serving that contains about 15 grams of carbohydrate. For most people with diabetes, a healthful meal plan has three to five (45 to 75 grams) carbohydrate choices at a meal and one to two (15 to 30 grams) carbohydrate choices for snacks.

Eat your meals and snacks every 4 to 6 hours to help even out your blood glucose level. Do not skip meals. If you do, your body may make extra glucose to compensate. This can make controlling your blood glucose even harder.

Breads, Cereals, Grains, Starchy Vegetables

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Bagel (most bagel shops)	1 large	60 to 75	4 to 5
Bagel	1 mini	15	1
Beans: baked, black, garbanzo, kidney	½ cup	21 to 30	1 ½ to 2
Bread: reduced calorie	2 slices	15	1
Bread: sticks (soft), 6- to 7-inch	1 stick	30	2
Bread: pumpernickel, rye, white, whole grain	1 slice	15	1
Cereal: cooked and unsweetened	½ cup	15	1
Cereal: dry	½ to 1 ⅓ cup	20 to 45	1 to 3
Coleslaw	½ cup	15	1
Corn	½ cup	15	1
Corn on the cob: 5- to 6-inch	1	15 to 20	1
Cornbread	2-inch square	23 to 34	1 ½ to 2
Couscous: cooked	½ cup	15 to 20	1
Dinner roll	1	15	1
Doughnut: cake	1	25	1 ½
Doughnut: glazed	1	35	2
Doughnut holes	2	15	1
English muffin	½	15	1
Graham crackers	3 squares	15	1
Green peas	½ cup	15	1
Hash browns	½ cup	15 to 23	1 to 1 ½
Hoagie roll	1	75	5
Hot dog or hamburger bun	½	15	1
Injera: 12-inch	1	32	2 ½

Breads, Cereals, Grains, Starchy Vegetables

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Lentils	½ cup	20	1
Muffin: extra large	1	50 to 75	4 to 5
Muffin: medium	1	24	1 ½
Pancake: 4-inch	1	15	1
Pasta: cooked (macaroni, noodles, spaghetti)	⅓ cup	15	1
Pita: 6-inch	1	30	2
Potato salad	½ cup	15	1
Potatoes: baked, 4- to 5-inch	1	45 to 60	3 to 4
Potatoes: french fries (frozen)	10 to 15	15	1
Potatoes: mashed	½ cup	15	1
Rice: brown, cooked	⅓ cup	15	1
Rice: wild, cooked	½ cup	15	1
Rice: white, cooked	⅓ cup	15	1
Ritz® crackers	6 to 7	15	1
Roti, 7 inches	1	20	1 to 1 ½
Saltine crackers	6	15	1
Squash: acorn	¼ medium (1 cup)	15	1
Squash: butternut	¼ medium (1 cup)	30	2
Stuffing	½ cup	10 to 15	1
Taco: corn shell, 6-inch	2	15	1
Tater tots	5	15	1
Tortilla: flour, 6-inch	1	15	1
Waffle: frozen	1	15	1
Wheat Thins®	12	15	1
Yam (sweet potato)	½ cup	15	1

Fruits

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Apple: small	1	15	1
Banana: large	1	30	2
Berries: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries	1 cup whole	15	1
Canned fruit: in juice	½ cup	15	1
Cherries	15	15	1
Clementines	2	15	1
Dates: large (dried)	5 to 6	76	5
Dates (fresh, without the pit)	4	37	2 ½
Grapefruit: medium	½	15	1
Grapes	15	15	1
Kiwi: large	1	15	1
Mango	½ cup	15	1
Melon	1 cup cubes	15	1
Nectarine: medium	1	15	1
Orange: medium	1	15	1
Peach: medium	1	15	1
Pear: small	1	15	1
Pineapple	1 cup	20	1
Plums: small	2	15	1
Raisins	2 tablespoons	15	1

Fruit and Vegetable Juice

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Apple, grapefruit, orange or pineapple	½ cup	15	1
Cranberry juice cocktail, grape, prune	⅓ cup	15	1
Fruit juice blends (100% juice)	⅓ cup	15	1
Fruit juice: reduced calorie	1 cup	10 to 15	1
Tomato juice	1 cup	10	1

Milk and Yogurt

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Milk: buttermilk, skim, whole, 1%, 2%	1 cup	15	1
Milk: chocolate	1 cup	30	2
Milk: soy (plain or flavored)	½ to 1 cup	15	1
Yogurt: plain or artificially sweetened	¾ cup	15	1
Yogurt: sweetened with fruit	¾ cup	30	2

Snacks and Sweets

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Angel food cake: unfrosted, 1-inch slice	1	15	1
Brownie: unfrosted, 2-by-2-inch	1	15	1
Cake: unfrosted, 2-by-2-inch	1	15	1
Cheesecake	⅓ of 9-inch	35 to 45	2 ½ to 3
Chips: potato or tortilla (regular)	10 to 15	15 to 20	1
Cookie: 3-inch	1	10 to 15	1
Cupcake: frosted, small	1	30	2
Frozen yogurt	½ cup	25	1 ½
Gelatin: regular	½ cup	15	1
Honey: regular	1 tablespoon	15	1
Ice cream cone: cake, sugar, wafer	1	3 to 9	0 to ½
Ice cream: light, low fat, regular	½ cup	15	1
Jam and jelly: regular	1 tablespoon	15	1
Pie: single crust	⅓ of 9-inch	25 to 45	1 ½ to 3
Pie: double crust	⅓ of 9-inch	45	3
Popcorn (popped)	3 cups	15	1

Snacks and Sweets

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Pretzels: mini twists	20	25	1 ½
Pudding: regular	½ cup	30	2
Pudding: sugar free	½ cup	15	1
Sherbet, sorbet, gelato	½ cup	30	2
Sugar: brown packed or white	1 tablespoon	15	1
Syrup: light	¼ cup	25	1 ½
Syrup: regular	¼ cup	52 to 60	3 ½ to 4
Syrup: sugar free	¼ cup	15	1

Convenience and Combination Foods

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Casserole (hot dish)	1 cup	30	2
Chili	1 cup	30	2
Pasta or potato salad	½ cup	15 to 25	1 to 1 ½
Soup: broth type	1 cup	15	1
Soup: cream type	1 cup	15 to 30	1 to 2
Sub sandwich	6-inch	45	3

Convenience and Combination Foods

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Asian			
Chinese egg noodles	1/3 cup	15	1
Chow mein	1 cup	15 to 20	1
Chow mein noodles	1/2 cup	15	1
Egg roll: 5-inch	1	23	1 1/2
Fried rice	1/3 cup	15	1
Lo mein (meat, noodles, vegetables)	1 cup	30 to 50	2 to 3
Stir-fry (meat, no rice)	1 cup	10	1
Sweet and sour: chicken or pork (no noodles, no rice)	1 cup	45	3
Sweet and sour sauce	1 tablespoon	15	1
Italian			
Lasagna	4-by-4-inch	45 to 60	3 to 4
Pizza: thick crust	1/8 large	30 to 45	2 to 3
Pizza: thin crust	1/8 large	25 to 35	1 1/2 to 2
Ravioli (no sauce)	9 to 11	45 to 60	3 to 4
Tomato sauce	1/2 cup	15	1
Mexican			
Burrito: 6- to 8-inch	1	45 to 60	3 to 4
Enchilada: 8-inch	1	50	3
Fajita: 6- to 8-inch	1	20	1
Quesadilla: 8- to 10-inch	1	30 to 40	2 to 3
Refried beans	1/2 cup	20	1

Free Foods

A free food is any food or beverage that contains fewer than 20 calories or 5 grams of carbohydrate per serving. Foods with a serving size listed below should be limited to no more than 3 servings at one time.

Carbohydrate-free beverages such as club soda, Crystal Light®, calorie-free water, diet soft drinks, coffee, and hot or unsweetened teas will not affect blood glucose.

Food	Serving Size	Carbohydrate Grams	Carbohydrate Choice
Artificial sweeteners	1 teaspoon	0 to 1	0
Barbeque sauce	2 teaspoons	4	0
Cocktail sauce	2 tablespoons	3	0
Dill pickles	4 slices	1	0
Gravy	¼ cup	3	0
Herbs and spices	1 teaspoon	1	0
Hummus	¼ cup	3	0
Ketchup	1 tablespoon	4	0
Lemon and lime juice	1 tablespoon	2	0
Mustard	2 tablespoons	3	0
Olives	2	2	0
Salsa	2 tablespoons	4	0
Soy sauce	1 tablespoon	1	0
Steak sauce	1 tablespoon	3 to 5	0
Sugar-free ice pops	1	3	0
Sugar-free jam or jelly	1 teaspoon	5	0
Sugar-free syrup	2 tablespoons	5	0

Vegetables

One serving of vegetables (½ cup cooked or 1 cup raw) has about 5 grams of carbohydrate. Three servings of vegetables at a meal or snack equals 1 carbohydrate choice.

- artichokes
- asparagus
- alfalfa sprouts
- bean sprouts
- beans
(green, Italian, waxed)
- beets
- broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- cabbage
- carrots
- cauliflower
- celery
- collard greens
- cucumber
- edamame
- eggplant
- endive
- greens
- jicama
- kohlrabi
- leeks
- lettuce
- mushrooms
- mustard greens
- okra
- onions
- parsnips
- pea pods
- peppers
- pumpkin
- radishes
- rhubarb
- rutabaga
- sauerkraut
- soybeans
- spinach
- squash: spaghetti,
summer
- swiss chard
- tomatoes
- turnips
- zucchini

Heart-healthy Eating With Diabetes: Making Good Protein and Fat Choices

Did You Know

A high-fat meal can cause insulin resistance and keep your blood glucose higher for a longer period of time.

People who have diabetes are more at risk for heart disease. That means the type and amount of protein and fat you eat can affect your heart health.

Poultry, meat and fish are high in protein which help your muscles stay healthy. However, if you eat too much of these, you add extra calories and fat. Most adults need about 6 to 8 ounces of meat (weight after cooking) each day. Think of this as one small and one medium serving each day. Three ounces looks like a deck of playing cards.

You need to eat some fat for good health. Fat provides energy and important nutrients. It is important to choose foods that have healthful kinds of fats. (See the list below.)

Unhealthful fats can clog blood vessels which can cause a heart attack or stroke. A general rule is to use 1 to 2 teaspoons of fat at each meal.

Types of Fats in Food

Monounsaturated (most healthful)	Polyunsaturated (healthful)	Saturated (less healthful)	Hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated trans fats* (not healthful)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ most nuts ■ peanut butter (natural or trans fat free)* ■ olive, canola, peanut and flaxseed oils ■ avocados 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ tub margarine (trans fat free with liquid oil as first ingredient)* ■ fatty fish (tuna, salmon, trout) ■ walnuts ■ sunflower, corn and soybean oils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ fatty meats ■ high-fat milk and cheese ■ coconut and palm oils ■ butter and lard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ many pre-packaged or prepared foods ■ crackers, cookies, cakes, doughnuts, pastries ■ fried fast food and chips ■ shortening and stick margarine

*Food products containing less than 0.5 grams of trans fats can be labeled as having 0 grams of trans fat. The only way to truly know if a food contains trans fat is to look at the ingredients list. Foods containing trans fats will have “partially hydrogenated oil” or “hydrogenated oil” listed in the ingredients list.

Fat contains more than twice the calories as the same amount of protein or carbohydrate. One serving size equals 5 grams of fat.

Heart-healthy fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated)

Fat	Serving Size
Avocado	2 tablespoons or 1/8 medium
Margarine: trans fat free, tub or squeeze	1 teaspoon
Margarine: reduced-fat tub	1 tablespoon
Mayonnaise and Miracle Whip [®] : regular	1 teaspoon
Mayonnaise and Miracle Whip [®] : light or reduced fat	1 tablespoon
Nuts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ almonds, cashews, mixed nuts ■ peanuts ■ pecans, walnuts 	6 10 4
Oil (all kinds)	1 teaspoon
Olives, large (black or green)	10
Peanut butter (natural or trans fat free) or nut butter	1 teaspoon
Salad dressing	1 tablespoon
Salad dressing: light or reduced fat	2 tablespoons
Sunflower seeds	2 tablespoons

Less heart-healthy fats (saturated and trans fat)

Fat	Serving Size
Alfredo sauce	2 tablespoons
Bacon	1 slice
Butter	1 teaspoon
Cream: regular or light	2 tablespoons
Cream cheese: light or reduced fat	2 tablespoons
Cream cheese: regular	1 tablespoon
Gravy	2 tablespoons
Shortening	1 teaspoon
Sour cream: regular	2 tablespoons
Sour cream: light or reduced fat	4 tablespoons
Tartar sauce	1 tablespoon

Dietary Fat Guidelines for Adults

	Weight Loss	Maintain Weight
Men	40 to 55 grams a day	65 to 75 grams a day
Women	30 to 45 grams a day	55 to 65 grams a day

Tips to Decrease Fat

- Buy lean cuts of meat such as round or loin.
- Trim all fat from meat before cooking.
- Remove skin and fat from poultry before cooking.
- Bake, roast, slow cook, broil, braise or grill meats instead of frying.
- Choose white meat more often than dark meat.
- Drain off fat after cooking and blot with a paper towel.
- Use a nonstick surface to pan broil foods.
- Do not eat gravies made with fatty drippings.
- Microwave, steam or par boil vegetables in a small amount of water. Season with only a small amount of fat or with spices.
- Use low-fat or fat-free margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressings, cream cheese and sour cream more often than regular versions.

Meat and Meat Substitutes

Meat and meat substitutes have protein and some fat but no carbohydrates. For most people, the recommended amount of protein is between 6 to 8 ounces a day. (A piece of meat that is the size of a deck of cards is equal to 3 ounces.)

Meat	Serving Size
Beef/veal	1 ounce
Canned fish	¼ cup
Cheese	1 ounce
Cottage cheese	¼ cup
Egg: medium	1
Egg substitute	¼ cup
Fish and seafood	1 ounce
Game	1 ounce
Hot dogs	1 ounce
Lamb	1 ounce
Lunch meat (choose lean cuts of meat)	1 ounce
Peanut butter	1 tablespoon
Poultry (chicken, turkey)	1 ounce
Pork	1 ounce
Soy or veggie burgers	1 ounce
Tempeh	¼ cup
Tofu	½ cup

What Real Portion Sizes Look Like



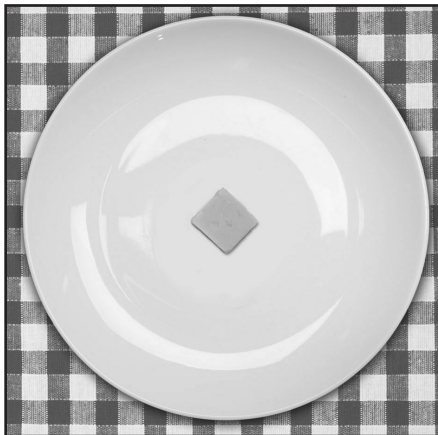
The foods pictured are on a 9-inch dinner plate.

When preparing meals, consider these portion sizes:

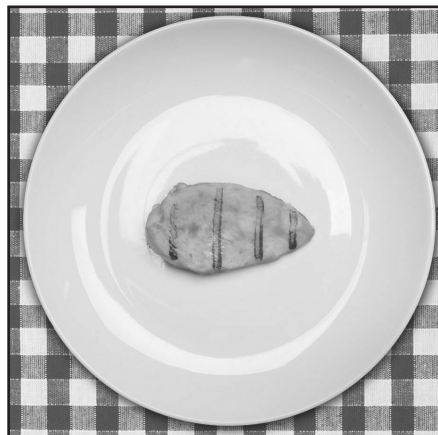
- pasta/rice: $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooked*
- meat: 3 ounces
- cheese: 1 ounce
- peanut butter/salad dressing: 1 tablespoon
- butter/mayonnaise: 1 teaspoon

*This portion equals 1 carbohydrate choice. Most people with diabetes can have 3 to 4 carbohydrate choices each meal.

If you choose to have all of your carbohydrate choices in pasta, you will need to avoid other carbohydrate foods (milk, fruit, starchy vegetables and dessert) at that meal.



One serving of cheese.



One serving of chicken.



One serving of salad dressing.



One serving of pasta.









One serving of peanut butter.



One serving of butter.

Understanding Portion Sizes

When a food scale or measuring cups aren't handy, you can still estimate your portion. Remember:

<p>Three ounces of meat is about the size and thickness of a deck of playing cards.</p>	
<p>One medium apple or 1 cup of cooked vegetables is about the size of a baseball.</p>	
<p>One ounce of cheese is about the size of four stacked dice.</p>	
<p>One-half cup of ice cream or ½ cup of cooked pasta is about the size of an ice cream scoop.</p>	
<p>One slice of bread or one 6-inch tortilla is about the size of a DVD.</p>	
<p>One teaspoon of butter is about the size of a poker chip.</p>	

What Should You Put on Your Plate?

When you are planning your meals, try to think about what your plate should look like. Use the example below to help you think about how your plate should look.

For breakfast:

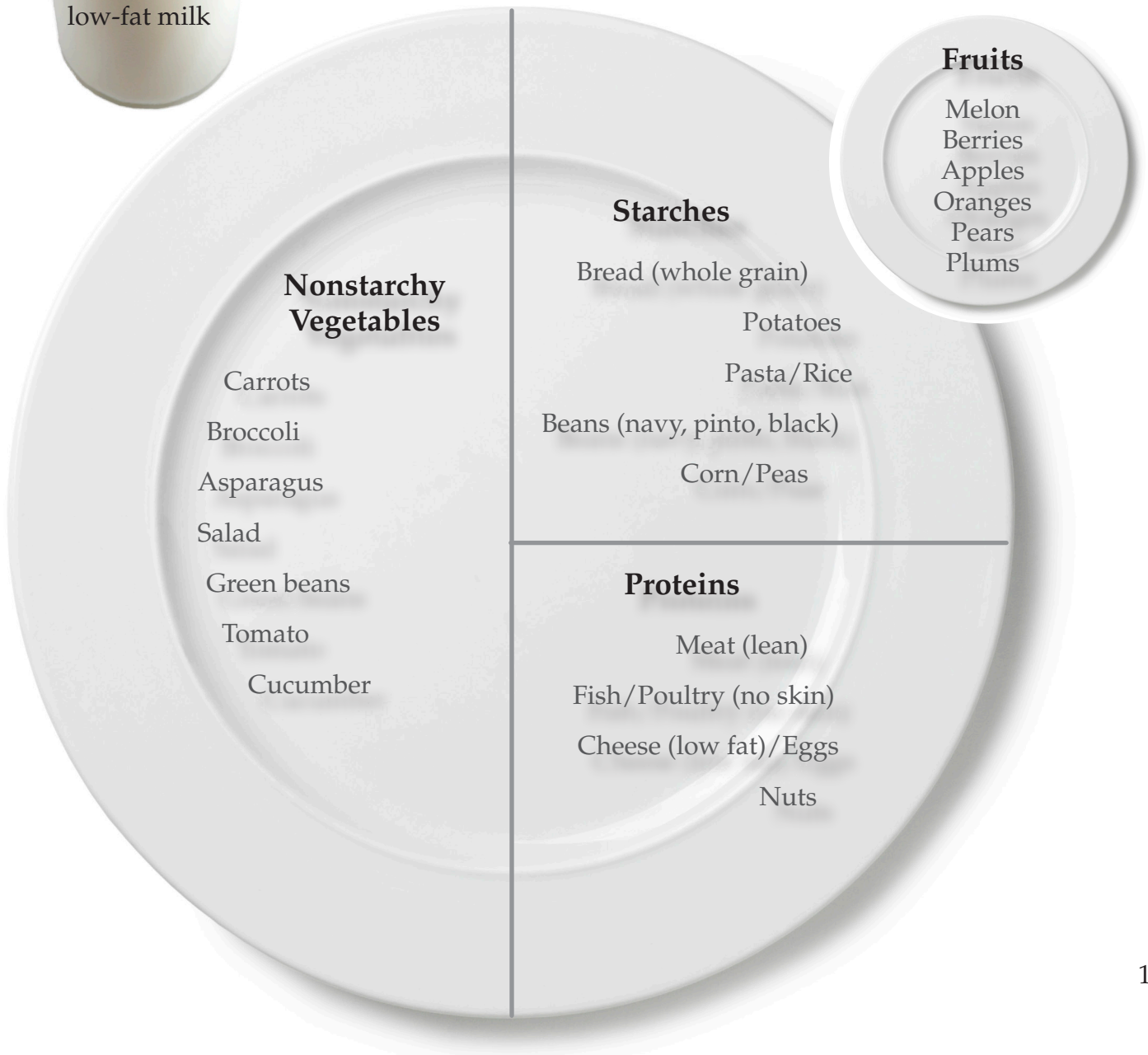
- half of your plate should be starches
- the other half should be split between protein and fruit.

For lunch and dinner:

- half of your plate should be full of non-starchy vegetables
- the other half should be split between protein and starches
- a small dish of fruit, if you want.



Fat-free or low-fat milk



What Should You Drink?

It's easy to overlook beverages when planning meals. Sugary drinks and juice can add empty calories and extra carbohydrates, so be sure to limit these.

Limit or avoid drinks that contains sugar such as iced tea, lemonade, soda, flavored waters and any drink that is labeled as "sweetened."

Choose:

- 1 cup skim or 1% milk
- ½ cup 100% juice
- 1 cup coffee or tea (no sugar)
- 8 ounces diet soda
- water.

Using Sweeteners

Did You Know?

Foods that are labeled "sugar free" often have sugar alcohols, such as sorbitol, mannitol and xylitol. Sugar free does not mean it is carbohydrate free.

You can find sugar alcohols in sugar-free foods such as sugar-free chocolate, ice creams and candy.

There are two types of sweeteners:

- **with calories:**
If you use granulated sugar, brown sugar, honey or syrup, use in moderation. One tablespoon of this sweetener has 15 grams of carbohydrate.
- **without calories (sugar substitutes):**
Aspartame (Equal[®], Nutrasweet[®]), saccharin (Sweet'N Low[®]), sucralose (Splenda[®]) or stevia (Truvia[®], Pure Via[™]) adds a few to no calories or carbohydrates.

How To Read Food Labels

Food label for a granola bar

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 bar (40 g)			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 170	Calories from Fat 60		
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat 7 g	11%		
Saturated Fat 3 g	15%		
Trans Fat 0 g			
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%		
Sodium 160 mg	7%		
Total Carbohydrate 24 g	8%		
Dietary Fiber 3 g	12%		
Sugars 10 g			
Protein 5 g			
Vitamin A 2%			
Vitamin C 2%			
Calcium 20%			
Iron 8%			
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total fat	Less than	65 g	80 g
Sat fat	Less than	20 g	25 g
Cholesterol	Less than	300 mg	300 mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400 mg	2,400 mg
Total Carbohydrate		300 g	375 g
Dietary Fiber		25 g	30 g

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Use the nutrition label for a granola bar at left to understand the following.

- **Serving size:** The serving size lists how many calories and nutrients are in one serving of the food. If you eat twice the serving size, you are getting twice the calories, fat, carbs, sodium, etc.
- **Calories and calories from fat:** Calories are a measure of energy released by a food. Try to limit your food choices to those that have less than one-third calories from fat.
- **Total fat:** Total fat includes all types of fat. Try to eat foods low in saturated and trans fats.
- **Saturated fat:** Saturated fat raises LDL (the “bad”) cholesterol. Reduce saturated fats to help protect your heart.
- **Trans fat:** Trans fats can raise LDL cholesterol, lower HDL cholesterol, and add to heart disease. Eat as little trans fats as possible. Avoid foods that contain “partially hydrogenated” and “hydrogenated” oils, including shortening.
- **Cholesterol:** Foods from animals (meat, fish, eggs, cheese, butter) have cholesterol.
- **Sodium:** Too much sodium (salt) can lead to high blood pressure. One teaspoon of salt has 2,400 milligrams of sodium. This is the upper limit most people need each day.
- **Total carbohydrate:** Carbohydrates give your body energy. However, too many can raise your blood glucose.
- **Fiber:** If the food has 5 or more grams of fiber, subtract half of the grams from the total carbohydrate.
- **Sugar:** Sugar is included in the number of total carbohydrate.
- **Protein:** Choose lean meats, poultry and fish.

Grams of carbohydrate	Number of carbohydrate choices
0 to 5	0
6 to 10	$\frac{1}{2}$
11 to 20	1
21 to 25	$1\frac{1}{2}$
26 to 35	2
36 to 40	$2\frac{1}{2}$
41 to 50	3
51 to 55	$3\frac{1}{2}$
56 to 65	4
66 to 70	$4\frac{1}{2}$
71 to 80	5

Sample Meal Plans

Breakfast examples with 4 carbohydrate choices

- 1 slice toast = 1 carbohydrate choice
- ½ cup hot cereal = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- ½ medium banana = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 cup (8 ounces) skim milk = 1 carbohydrate choice
- coffee or tea

-or-

- 1 (4-inch) pancake = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons of light syrup = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 cup melon or berries = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 cup skim milk = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 teaspoon margarine
- coffee or tea

-or-

- 1 ½ cups dry, unsweetened cereal with 1 cup skim milk = 3 carbohydrate choices
- ½ cup orange juice = 1 carbohydrate choice
- coffee or tea

Lunch examples with 4 carbohydrate choices

- 1 hamburger bun = 2 carbohydrate choices
- 1 small hamburger
- 1 teaspoon mayonnaise
- green salad
- 1 tablespoons salad dressing
- 1 small apple = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 cup skim milk = 1 carbohydrate choice

-or-

- 1 cup soup (broth based with rice, noodles or navy beans) = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 sandwich (2 slices of bread, 2 ounces low-fat meat, 1 tablespoon light mayonnaise) = 2 carbohydrate choices
- 1 cup cantaloupe cubes = 1 carbohydrate choice
- coffee, tea or diet soda (pop)

-or-

- 3 slices thin crust medium-size cheese pizza = 3 carbohydrate choices
- lettuce salad with 2 tablespoons low-calorie salad dressing
- ½ cup frozen yogurt = 1 carbohydrate choice
- coffee, tea or diet soda (pop)

Dinner examples with 4 carbohydrate choices

- 1 pork chop
- 1 small baked potato = 2 carbohydrate choices
- 1 teaspoon margarine
- ½ cup coleslaw = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 cup watermelon cubes = 1 carbohydrate choice
- coffee, tea or diet soda (pop)

-or-

- 3 meatballs with ½ cup sauce = 1 carbohydrate choice
- ⅔ cup pasta = 2 carbohydrate choices
- green salad with 1 tablespoon dressing
- 1 cup strawberries = 1 carbohydrate choice
- coffee, tea or diet soda (pop)

-or-

- 1 cup stir-fry (meat, sauce and vegetables) = 1 carbohydrate choice
- ⅔ cup steamed rice = 2 carbohydrate choices
- ½ cup low-fat ice cream = 1 carbohydrate choice
- coffee, tea or diet soda (pop)

Snack examples

- 1 piece fresh fruit = 1 to 2 carbohydrate choices
- 1 cup skim milk and 3 graham crackers = 2 carbohydrate choices
- 6 ounces artificially sweetened yogurt = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 (3-inch) cookie = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 3 cups (popped) microwave light popcorn = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 1 granola bar (15 to 20 carbohydrate grams) = 1 carbohydrate choice
- 15 mini pretzel twists = 1 carbohydrate choice

Meal Plan: What To Remember

- Enjoy your favorite foods in moderation.
- Eat some carbohydrates at each meal.
- Eat your regular meals at about the same time each day.
- Do not skip meals.
- Have a meal or snack every 4 to 6 hours while you are awake.

Dining Out

Tip

Limit alcohol. It can affect judgment and cause overeating.

- The portions are often too large.
- The amount and type of fat can be hard to figure.
- If you are very hungry, you may be tempted to make poor choices or eat too much.

How to eat out

- Plan ahead. Do not go to a restaurant hungry.
- Eat moderate portions. Share a meal. Ask for a to-go box when you are served and put half of the meal into it before you start eating.
- Ask about child-size portions.
- Ask for salad dressing, sour cream, sauces, butter and mayonnaise on the side.
- Choose foods that are broiled, baked, grilled or steamed.
- Do not panic if you eat too much. Just get back on track.

Tip

If you are pregnant, check with your dietitian about a meal plan that is right for you.

Other tips

- You may eat or drink calorie-free and sugar-free foods. Be careful about sugar-free foods that have more than 20 calories per serving. Eating a lot of these foods may raise your blood glucose.
- Try to eat 3 to 5 servings of carrots, green and yellow beans, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, tomatoes and cucumbers every day. These nonstarchy vegetables have vitamins, minerals and fiber but not much carbohydrate.
- Low fat on a food label does not mean it is low in carbohydrates or calories.
- Sugar free does not mean it is carbohydrate free.
- High-fat meals tend to make your blood glucose stay up for a longer time.

Resources

American Diabetes Association (ADA)
diabetes.org

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)
eatright.org

American Heart Association (AHA)
americanheart.org

National Kidney Foundation (NKF)
kidney.org



Allina Health

allinahealth.org