

# Diabetes and Nutrition

## Eating Healthful Foods is Important

Because of your diabetes, your body is unable to effectively use the energy from the food you eat. One way to help your body is to make sure that it has a steady supply of healthful foods. Extreme highs and lows of blood glucose can harm your body.

Foods that contain carbohydrates turn into glucose (sugar) which is used by your body for energy. Examples of carbohydrates include milk, fruits, desserts, sugar-sweetened beverages and starches such as bread, cereal, rice, pasta and potatoes, peas and corn.

## Tips for a Healthy Body

- Try to eat your meals at the same time every day.
- Eat at least three meals during the day and include small snacks if meals are more than 4 to 5 hours apart. Choose foods that are high in nutrients such as:
  - fruits and vegetables
  - fat-free or low-fat dairy
  - lean protein such as fish, poultry (without skin), and beans and legumes
  - whole grains
  - nuts and seeds
  - healthful fats such as olive oil, canola oil and avocado.

See sample meal plans in the next section.

- Don't skip meals. Your liver will make up for the loss of glucose from these skipped meals, by producing extra glucose.
- Try to eat as few pre-packaged (processed) foods as possible, which can be high in calories, unhealthful fats, sodium (salt) and added sugars. Limit red meats (especially processed meats), and sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages. Avoid eating "tropical" oils such as coconut, palm kernel and palm oils.

## Sample Meal Plans

Follow this meal plan to help regulate your blood glucose until a dietitian sees you.

### ■ Breakfast

- 1 slice whole-grain toast, ½ cup hot cereal, 1 tablespoon peanut butter, ½ large or 1 small banana, 1 cup skim milk, coffee or tea

or

- two 4-inch pancakes, 1 egg, sugar-free syrup, 1 cup melon or berries, 1 cup skim milk, coffee or tea

or

- 1 ½ cups (dry) unsweetened whole-grain cereal with 1 cup skim milk, 1 small orange, coffee or tea

(over)

## ■ Lunch

- 1 hamburger bun, 1 small hamburger, green salad, 2 tablespoons low-calorie or oil and vinegar-style salad dressing, 1 apple, 1 cup skim milk

or

- 1 cup broth-based soup with vegetables, 1 sandwich (2 slices whole-grain bread, 2 ounces lean meat, 1 tablespoon light mayonnaise), 1 slice cantaloupe, coffee, tea or sugar-free beverage

or

- 2 slices thin crust pizza, lettuce salad, 2 tablespoons low-calorie or oil and vinegar-style salad dressing, coffee, tea or sugar-free beverage

## ■ Dinner

- one 3-ounce chicken breast, 1 medium baked potato with 1 teaspoon light margarine or light butter spread, 1 slice whole-grain bread, 1 cup watermelon cubes, coffee, tea or sugar-free beverage

or

- 3 meatballs (made with lean ground beef) with  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup sauce, 1 cup pasta, green salad, 2 tablespoons low-calorie or oil and vinegar-style salad dressing, 1 cup strawberries, coffee, tea or sugar-free beverage

or

- 1 cup stir-fry (lean meat and vegetables), 1 cup steamed brown rice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup pineapple, coffee, tea or sugar-free beverage

## ■ Snacks

- 1 piece fresh fruit with 1 tablespoon nut butter

or

- 1 granola bar

or

- 6 whole-grain crackers with 1 ounce low-fat cheese

or

- $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 cup whole-grain cereal with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup low-fat milk

or

- 6 ounces plain or sugar-free yogurt with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup berries and 1 ounce nuts

or

- 6 cups (popped) plain or light microwave popcorn