

Living happily and healthily with diabetes



Eat, move, monitor!

Living with diabetes is a chance to do more, not less

If you follow the recommendations for healthy living, you can manage your diabetes extremely well. You can prevent, delay, or minimise the complications associated with diabetes.

As you read this, you're actually taking one of the most important steps you can possibly take: learning more about diabetes. Your knowledge gives you tremendous power over the disease.

Here are three areas, with some tips for each area to help manage diabetes:¹

Eat

- Try the Plate Method (see example on back)
- Split desserts with friends and family
- Avoid buffets
- Start your meal with broth-based soup or a salad
- Try new herbs and spices
- Drink more water

Move

- 30 minutes of aerobic exercise at least 5x a week (or three 10 minutes of activity during the day)
- Strength exercises 2x a week
- Stretch as often as you can
- Balance exercises 3 or more days a week
- Start slow and build up
- Check with your healthcare provider before starting or increasing your exercise

Monitor

- Track your glucose numbers
- Weigh yourself
- Take your prescribed diabetic medication
- Check your feet for any cuts, redness or blisters
- See a dentist for an exam and cleaning every 6 months
- Get eye exams annually
- Get annual cancer screenings

We understand that changing your eating habits can be difficult. So let's take a closer look at food planning. Remember, there's no "one size fits all" diabetes diet.¹ You have a lot of flexibility in what you eat, and can even include your favourite foods on the menu. This is one example of the Plate Method for planning healthy meals. This method helps you control portion sizes of starchy and carbohydrate-containing foods that have the most impact on blood glucose levels. It focuses on eating more nonstarchy vegetables, which are low in carbohydrate and calories and high in vitamins, minerals and fibre. It also helps you get enough lean protein.

Plate Method

For the Plate Method, your food can be piled about the thickness of a deck of cards or the palm of your hand.

Grains and starchy vegetables

- Whole grain breads or crackers
- Whole grain, high-fibre cereal
- Oatmeal, grits, hominy, or cream of wheat
- Rice, pasta, tortillas
- Cooked beans and peas
- Potatoes, corn, winter squash

Protein

- Chicken or turkey (without the skin)
- Fish
- Shellfish
- Lean cuts of beef and pork such as sirloin or pork loin
- Tofu, eggs, low-fat cheese

Milk

- Skim, 1/2%, or 1% milk
- Low-fat or fat-free yogurt
- Plain soy milk

Fruit

- Fresh, frozen, or canned in juice or light syrup

Non-starchy vegetables

- Fresh, frozen, or canned carrots, leafy greens, green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, tomatoes, vegetable juice, salsa, onion, cucumber, beets, okra, mushroom, peppers, turnip

Diabetes Australia advises that having a healthy diet and being active is an important part of managing diabetes because it will help manage your blood glucose levels and body weight.¹

To help manage your diabetes it is recommended that you²:

- Eat regular meals and spread them evenly throughout the day
- Eat a diet lower in fat, particularly saturated fat
- Have between meal snacks if you take insulin or diabetes tablets

It's a good idea to review your food plan with your healthcare provider as everyone's needs are different. For example, if you have kidney disease, your healthcare provider may want you to eat less protein. Also review your exercise regimen. If your blood glucose levels are not yet well controlled, your doctor may want you to avoid certain kinds of workouts. You may need extra screenings and assessments in addition to your regular preventive exams. *Be sure to keep all appointments for exam.*

1. Diabetes Australia, "Eating Well", www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/eating-well

2. Diabetes Australia, "What Should I Eat?", www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/what-should-i-eat

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