Diabetic Meal Planning Guide

The diabetic meal planning guide is a tool to help you plan your meals and snacks. It is important for people with diabetes to manage their blood sugar levels. Choosing the right foods and the right amounts throughout your day will help control your blood sugar. Eating right can even help you improve your blood pressure and reach or maintain a healthy weight.

CARBOHYDRATE COUNTING MADE EASY

When you eat carbohydrates, they turn to sugar (*glucose*). This raises your blood sugar level. Counting carbohydrates can help you control this level so you feel better. When you plan your meals by counting carbohydrates, you can have more flexibility in what you eat and balance your medicine with your food intake.

Carbohydrate counting simply means adding up the total amount of carbohydrate grams (g) in your meals or snacks. Try to eat about the same amount at each meal. Foods with carbohydrates are listed below. Each portion below is 1 carbohydrate serving or 15 grams of carbohydrates. Ask your dietician how many grams of carbohydrates you should eat at each meal or snack.

Grains and Starches
1 slice bread
1/2 English muffin or hotdog/hamburger bun
3/4 cup cold cereal (unsweetened)
1/3 cup cooked pasta or rice
1/2 cup starchy vegetables (corn, potatoes, peas, beans, winter squash)
1 tortilla (6 inches)
1/4 bagel
1 waffle or pancake (size of a CD)
1/2 cup cooked cereal
4 to 6 small crackers

Fruit
1 cup fresh unsweetened berries, melon, papaya, pineapple
1 small fresh fruit
1/2 banana or mango
1/2 cup fruit juice (4 ounces unsweetened)
1/2 cup canned fruit in natural juice or water
2 tablespoons dried fruit
12 to 15 grapes or cherries

Milk and Yogurt
1 cup fat-free or 1% milk
1 cup soy milk
6 ounces light yogurt with sugar-free sweetener
6 ounces low-fat soy yogurt
6 ounces plain yogurt

Vegetables
1 cup raw or 1/2 cup cooked is counted as 0 carbohydrates or a "free" food.
If you eat 3 or more servings at one meal, count them as 1 carbohydrate serving.

Other Carbohydrates
3/4 ounces chips or pretzels

1/2 cup ice cream or frozen yogurt
1/4 cup sherbet or sorbet
2 inch square cake, no frosting
1 tablespoon honey, sugar, jam, jelly, or syrup
2 small cookies
3 squares of graham crackers
3 cups popcorn
6 crackers
1 cup broth-based soup
Count 1 cup casserole or other mixed foods as 2 carbohydrate servings.
Foods with less than 20 calories in a serving may be counted as 0 carbohydrates or a "free" food.

You may want to purchase a book or computer software that lists the carbohydrate gram counts of different foods. In addition, the nutrition facts panel on the labels of the foods you eat are a good source of this information. The label will tell you how big the serving size is and the total number of carbohydrate grams you will be eating per serving. Divide this number by 15 to obtain the number of carbohydrate servings in a portion. Remember: 1 carbohydrate serving equals 15 grams of carbohydrate.

SERVING SIZES

Measuring foods and serving sizes helps you make sure you are getting the right amount of food. The list below tells how big or small some common serving sizes are.

- 1 ounce (oz) of cheese.....4 stacked dice.
- 2 to 3 oz cooked meat.....Deck of cards.
- 1 teaspoon (tsp).....Tip of little finger.
- 1 tablespoon (Tbsp).....Thumb.
- 2 Tbsp.....Golf ball.
- 1/2 cup.....Half of a fist.
- 1 cup.....A fist.

SAMPLE DIABETIC MEAL PLAN

Below is a sample meal plan that includes foods from the grain and starches, dairy, vegetable, fruit, and meat groups. A dietician can individualize a meal plan to fit your calorie needs and tell you the number of servings needed from each food group. However, controlling the total amount of carbohydrates in your meal or snack is more important than making sure you include all of the food groups at every meal. You may interchange carbohydrate containing foods (dairy, starches, and fruits).

The meal plan below is an example of a 2000 calorie diet using carbohydrate counting. This meal plan has 17 carbohydrate servings (carb choices).

Breakfast	1 cup oatmeal (2 carb choices) 3/4 cup light yogurt (1 carb choice) 1 cup blueberries (1 carb choice) 1/4 cup almonds
Snack	1 large apple (2 carb choices) 1 low-fat string cheese stick

Lunch	Chicken breast salad: • 1 cup spinach • 1/4 cup chopped tomatoes • 2 oz chicken breast, sliced • 2 Tbsp low-fat Italian dressing 12 whole-wheat crackers (2 carb choices) 12 to 15 grapes (1 carb choice) 1 cup low-fat milk (1 carb choice)
Snack	1 cup carrots 1/2 cup hummus (1 carb choice)
Dinner	3 oz broiled salmon 1 cup brown rice (3 carb choices)
Snack	1 1/2 cups steamed broccoli (1 carb choice) drizzled with 1 tsp olive oil and lemon juice 1 cup light pudding (2 carb choices)

DIABETIC MEAL PLANNING WORKSHEET

Your dietician can use this worksheet to help you decide how many servings of foods and what types of foods are right for you.

Breakfast

Food Group and Servings **Carb Choices**

Grain/Starches _____

Dairy _____

Vegetable _____

Fruit _____

Meat _____

Fat _____

Lunch

Food Group and Servings **Carb Choices**

Grain/Starches _____

Dairy _____

Fruit _____

Meat _____

Fat _____

Dinner

Food Group and Servings **Carb Choices**

Grain/Starches _____

Dairy _____

Fruit _____

Meat _____

Fat _____

Snacks

Food Group and Servings **Carb Choices**

Grain/Starches _____

Dairy _____

Vegetable _____

Fruit _____

Meat _____

Fat _____

Daily Totals

Starches _____
Vegetable _____
Fruit _____
Dairy _____
Meat _____
Fat _____

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