

# Type 2 diabetes

People with type 2 diabetes can eat the same healthy diet as everyone else. A special diet is not needed for type 2 diabetes. Here are some ways you can control your blood glucose (sugar) level by eating well and being active.

## Eat mostly foods from the five food groups

- Try to include a variety of foods from the five food groups every day. The five food groups are:
  - Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and high in fibre
  - Vegetables and legumes/beans
  - Fruit
  - Milk, yoghurt and cheese (and non-dairy alternatives, if needed)
  - Lean meat and meat alternatives, such as eggs, legumes and nuts.

## Foods that we eat sometimes

- Foods that we eat sometimes, are those that are high in fat, sugar and/or salt.
- These are foods such as chips, soft drink, cakes and biscuits.
- Eat these foods occasionally and in small amounts.

## Choosing carbohydrates to eat every day

- The carbohydrates in food or drinks breaks down to glucose (sugar) in your body when you eat.
- Glucose is important to fuel your body and give you energy. Some types of carbohydrate will fuel you better than others.
- Try eating a variety of carbohydrate-containing foods every day.

Carbohydrate foods you can enjoy every day	
<b>Grain (cereal) foods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose wholegrain types of bread, cereal, rice, pasta, noodles and crackers.</li> </ul>
<b>Starchy vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potato, sweet potato, corn, legumes and lentils (kidney beans, chickpeas, baked beans).</li> </ul>
<b>Fruit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose fresh, frozen or canned in juice (with no added sugar).</li> <li>Every now and then you might like to have a small amount of dried fruit, or a small glass of 100% fruit juice, but whole fruit is the best choice.</li> </ul>
<b>Dairy products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milk, yoghurt and cheese</li> </ul>

Some food and drinks contain carbohydrate energy but not many other important vitamins or minerals. Try not to have these foods every day. Instead, try having the ones you really enjoy only sometimes and in small amounts.

Carbohydrate foods to eat only sometimes and in small amounts	
<b>Drinks high in sugar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose less cordial, soft drink and fruit juice drinks with added sugar.</li> <li>Instead, choose water as your main drink. You might like to try sparkling water for variety, or try adding pieces of fruit to flavour your water.</li> </ul>
<b>Sandwich and toast spreads high in sugar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose less sweet spreads such as jam, honey and chocolate spreads.</li> <li>Instead, go for options based on foods from the five food groups, such as salad, cheese, eggs and lean meat.</li> </ul>
<b>Foods high in fat and sugar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eat less chocolate, lollies, biscuits, ice-cream, pastries and cakes.</li> <li>Instead, try to replace these with foods from the five food groups for meals and snacks.</li> </ul>

This general advice was accurate at the time of publication (June 2020).  
 For more information about nutrition and your individual needs, see your GP  
 or an Accredited Practising Dietitian.

## Eat regular meals and spread carbohydrates out evenly over the day

- Aim to eat three regular meals. Some people with diabetes may also need to include snacks between meals. Talk to your doctor, diabetes educator or Accredited Practising Dietitian about what is best for you.
- Eating large amounts of carbohydrate containing food at any one time can raise blood glucose levels.
- Try to spread your carbohydrate containing foods out evenly over the day by including some at each meal. This keeps energy levels up without causing high blood glucose levels.

## Enjoy regular physical activity

Physical activity helps to improve your diabetes control by helping insulin to work better. It also helps with maintaining a healthy weight and blood pressure.

- For aerobic fitness: on most days, aim to do at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity. Moderate intensity activity means your heart rate will be higher, but you should still be able to talk. Try walking, cycling or dancing.
- For strength: two or three times per week, try to build some strength activities into your routine. Try lifting and carrying objects (such as groceries), walking upstairs or digging in the garden.
- For balance: make a time each day to do these activities. Try standing on one foot or walking heel-to-toe.
- For flexibility: try to do some form of stretching every day. You could try Tai Chi, yoga or dancing, or even do some simple stretching exercises while watching TV.
- If you have been inactive, it is best to see your GP for advice before starting any physical activity.