



# Healthy Meals for Diabetes

Ask your healthcare team to help you make a meal plan that fits your needs. Your meal plan tells you when to eat your meals and snacks, what kinds of foods to eat, and how much of each food to eat. You don't have to give up all the foods you like. But you do need to follow some guidelines.

## Eat Foods Rich in Fiber

Fiber is a carbohydrate that breaks down slowly. Fiber is also healthy for your heart. Fiber-rich foods include:

- Whole-grain breads and cereals
- Bulgur wheat
- Brown rice
- Whole-wheat pasta
- Fruits and vegetables
- Dry beans, and peas

## Choose Healthy Protein Foods

Eating protein that is low in fat can help you control your weight. It also helps keep your heart healthy.

Low-fat protein foods include:

- Fish
- Plant proteins, such as dry beans and peas, nuts, and soy products like tofu and soymilk
- Lean meat with all visible fat removed
- Poultry with the skin removed
- Low-fat or nonfat milk, cheese, and yogurt

## Limit Unhealthy Fats and Sugar

Saturated and trans fats are unhealthy for your heart. They raise LDL (bad) cholesterol. Fat is also high in calories, so it can make you gain weight. To cut down on unhealthy fats, limit these foods:

- Butter or margarine
- Palm and palm kernel oils and coconut oil
- Cream
- Cheese
- Bacon
- Lunch meats
- Ice cream
- Sweet bakery goods such as pies, muffins, and donuts
- Jams and jellies
- Candy bars
- Regular sodas

## How Much to Eat

The amount of food you eat affects your blood glucose. It also affects your weight. Your healthcare team will tell you how much of each type of food you should eat.

- Use measuring cups and spoons and a food scale to measure serving sizes.
- Learn what a correct serving size looks like on your plate. This will help when you are away from home and can't measure your servings.
- Eat only the number of servings given on your meal plan for each food. Don't take seconds.

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## When to Eat

Your meal plan will likely include breakfast, lunch, dinner, and some snacks.

- Try to eat your meals and snacks at about the same times each day.
- Eat *all* your meals and snacks. Skipping a meal or snack can make your blood glucose drop too low. It can also cause you to eat too much at the next meal or snack. Then your blood glucose could get too high.