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# Healthy Nutrition

Tips from the Wright & Filippis Registered Dietitian

Age, gender, activity level, weight and diabetes medications are all factors that determine the best eating plan for you. Many diabetics do well by following basic guidelines of sensible eating and using blood glucose testing to adjust their diet. If you aren't achieving your goals, consult your doctor, dietitian or diabetes educator.

## How Food Affects Blood Glucose

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 oz (28g/about 39 pieces)	
Servings Per Container about 52	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 160	Calories from Fat 100
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 4g	
Monounsaturated Fat 6g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium</b> 110mg	5%
<b>Potassium</b> 180mg	5%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 7g	2%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 4g	6%
<b>Protein</b> 6g	
Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0% • Calcium 2%	
Iron 6% • Vitamin E 10% • Niacin 15%	
Phosphorus 10% • Magnesium 10%	
Copper 15% • Manganese 25%	
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g
	300mg
	Less than 2,400mg

### Carbohydrate

Most blood glucose (sugar) comes from carbohydrate. If you are overwhelmed with diet advice, focus first on carbohydrate.

### Fiber

Fiber is a carbohydrate that passes through undigested and won't increase blood sugar. If adjusting your insulin based on carbohydrate intake, ask your doctor, dietitian or diabetes educator whether or not to subtract fiber.

### Protein

Protein doesn't directly affect blood sugar. Some diabetics report more stable blood sugar if they have protein with each meal. Protein may help you feel full longer which helps with weight control.

### Fat

Fat produces very little glucose but does slow stomach emptying. This affects how fast glucose from other food goes into the blood. If you are having trouble adjusting mealtime insulin, dietary fat may be a factor.

**NOTE:** Fiber and sugar are part of your total carbohydrate. Too many high sugar foods may worsen blood sugar, but total carbohydrate has the most impact.

# The *Carbohydrate Choices* Method

A **carbohydrate choice** is a serving of food that has about **15 grams** of carbohydrate. Women usually need **3-4 carbohydrate choices** (45 to 60 grams) at *each meal* and men usually need **4-5 choices** (60-75 grams). If you eat snacks, **1-2 carbohydrate choices** (15-30 grams) is reasonable. If trying to lose weight or blood sugar is too high, start with the lower amount.

To adjust intake, check blood glucose before and two hours after the start of the same meal or snack. Review your blood glucose log with your physician to set goals. Once you learn how much carbohydrate is best, eat about this amount daily at consistent times. Unless activity level, weight or diabetes medication changes, your blood sugar should remain fairly stable. If you haven't met your blood sugar or weight goals, work with a registered dietitian and/or diabetes educator to "fine-tune" diet to match physical activity and action of medications.



## Recommended Resources

Use these resources for more "Carb Choice" examples and other approaches to meal planning such as the food pyramid, plate method or carbohydrate counting.

**American Association of Diabetes Educators**  
"Find a Diabetes Educator"  
(800) 338-3633  
[www.diabeteseducator.org](http://www.diabeteseducator.org)

**American Diabetes Association**  
(800) 342-2383  
[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

**American Dietetic Association**  
"Find a Nutrition Professional"  
(800) 877-1600  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

**National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse**  
(800) 860-8747  
[www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)

## ONE *Carbohydrate Choice*

### Cereals and Grains:

1 slice bread or ¼ large bagel  
½ cup cooked cereal  
¾ cup unsweetened cold cereal  
⅓ cup pasta or rice  
¾ oz. pretzels or chips  
6 saltine crackers  
3 graham cracker squares

### Starchy Vegetables and Legumes:

½ cup potato, corn or green peas  
1 cup winter squash  
½ cooked dried beans  
⅓ cup baked beans

### Fruit:

1 small fresh fruit  
½ cup "no sugar added" canned fruit  
¾ - 1¼ cup melon or berries  
1-2 tbsp. dried fruit  
⅓ - ½ cup fruit juice

### Dairy/Soy:

1 cup milk or soy milk (plain or vanilla)  
⅔ cup unsweetened yogurt  
½ cup ice cream  
¼ cup sherbet  
½ - ¾ cup "no sugar added" pudding

Note: Foods with less than 20 calories and 5 grams of carbohydrate per serving don't have to be counted unless you eat enough at one time to equal 15 grams or more.



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