

Just *the* Basics

In diabetes, your body has a hard time using and storing food energy. The food energy that your body needs is a kind of sugar called glucose. Glucose comes from healthy foods such as fruit, milk, starchy foods (bread, rice, and noodles) plus sugar-sweetened foods and drinks. After eating, your blood glucose goes up.

Aboriginal version

Take care of your whole body,
mind and spirit. Being well helps you,
your family and community.



When to eat

- **Eat meals with your family.**
Why: Eating together is important. This makes mealtimes enjoyable and sets a good example for your children. It is a way to show respect and thanksgiving for the gifts of life and food that you have been given.
- **Eat three meals a day. Space them no more than 6 hours apart.**
Why: Eating the right amount at the right time helps keep your blood glucose in balance. This is the way that the Creator made the body to work.
- **If not at home when it is time to eat, bring healthy foods with you.**
Why: This helps you have healthy choices wherever you go (pack a sandwich, carry some vegetables or fruit).

**Physical activity and
healthy eating are ways
to live well with diabetes.**



What to eat

- **Eat a variety of foods at each meal or snack.**
Why: Choosing foods from all food groups will make sure that the body gets all the nutrients it needs to be healthy.
- **Choose foods that are close to the way nature made them.**
 Wild meats and fish, seaweed, berries, wild rice, oatmeal, lentils, barley, vegetables and cooked dried beans are good choices.
Why: Foods that come from the land are the best choices for the body. These foods are packed with the nutrients that nature gave them and can be found close to home.
- **Include foods high in fibre.**
 Whole grain breads, cereals and pasta, fresh fruits, vegetables and legumes (dried beans and lentils) are good choices.
Why: Many foods high in fibre may help you feel full and lower your blood glucose and cholesterol levels.
- **Eat more vegetables** (fresh, frozen, or canned).
Why: Vegetables are high in the nutrients the body needs to be healthy.



- **If you are thirsty, choose safe drinking water.**
 Artificial sweeteners can be safe in small amounts.
Why: Drinking regular pop, fruit juice, sweetened coffee and sugar-sweetened drinks like Tang™ and Kool-Aid™ will raise your blood glucose.
- **Limit high fat and greasy foods,** (such as fried foods, lard, and chips).
 Boil, bake, roast, or poach foods.
Why: High fat foods are hard on the heart and may cause weight gain. A healthy weight is easier for the heart and helps with blood glucose control.
- **Limit sugars and sweets.** (such as desserts, donuts, chocolate bars and candies).
Why: The more sugar you eat or drink, the higher your blood glucose will be.

How much to eat

- **Eat slowly and stop when you feel satisfied.**
Why: The right amount of food gives your body what it needs to be healthy. If you eat too much, your body will store the extra energy as fat.

*Eat healthy!
Live healthy!*

1 fruit or berries

Vegetables
 • 2 or more different kinds
 • Fill half your plate with vegetables

Starch
 One of these:
 • Whole wheat Bannock
 • Whole wheat bread
 • Potato
 • Whole wheat pasta
 • Brown rice

Protein
 One of these:
 • Traditional meat
 • Fish
 • Skinless chicken
 • Peanut butter
 • Eggs

Milk or water

Make your plate look like this...

Let's try it!

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What is one change that you can make to care for your mind, body, and spirit?

Like all living creatures, our bodies were made to move.

Why: Be active—move more to help your body work better. Walking, dancing, berry picking, and hunting will help manage your blood glucose and weight.

Make physical activity part of your day.

- Try to be active most days of the week.
- Make physical activity part of the daily routine, such as walking to the store.
- Start slowly and gradually increase the amount of effort.
- Make family activities active (such as snowshoeing, berry picking, dancing).
- Participate in organized sports such as hockey or soccer.
- Enjoy your improved sense of health and wellbeing.

Respect your body. Keep tobacco sacred.

Why: Smoking will make it harder for the body to fight diabetes. Smoking increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Talk to your healthcare worker about ways to quit.

Use alcohol respectfully

Why: Alcohol can affect blood glucose levels, cause you to gain weight and change how your body uses medicine. Talk to your healthcare worker about how much alcohol is safe for you.

Across the country, the Canadian Diabetes Association is leading the fight against diabetes by helping people with diabetes live healthy lives while we work to find a cure. We are supported in our efforts by a community-based network of volunteers, employees, healthcare professionals, researchers and partners. By providing education and services, advocating on behalf of people with diabetes, supporting research and translating research into practical applications – we are delivering on our mission.

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