

**ASCENSIA**  
HEALTHFACTS

# Healthy Meal Planning



Bayer HealthCare

# HEALTHY MEAL PLANNING



The foods you eat – and how much you eat – can affect your blood glucose and blood lipids (cholesterol, triglycerides). You can improve your blood glucose control by making food choices that build healthy meals. But healthy eating doesn't mean you have to deprive yourself of food you enjoy. It just means you have to follow your meal plan for the amount of carbohydrate, fat and protein

you eat (these are the three food nutrients that give us calories).

## Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are found in grains, fruits and vegetables. Milk, yogurt and sweets are also sources of carbohydrate.

The carbohydrate in food is turned into blood glucose and provides your body with energy. Eating about the same amount of carbohydrate foods at the same time each day will help with blood glucose control. No matter what your blood glucose reading is, try not to skip meals or snacks.

Skipping meals and snacks may cause swings in your blood glucose levels. Become consistent in your carbohydrate intake to help balance food with your medication and activity for good blood glucose control. Discuss with your healthcare team what is best to eat and when.



## Grains, Fruits and Vegetables

Eating a variety of foods in moderation is key to building a healthy diet. The base of the Food Pyramid is made of grains, fruits and vegetables. These are the foods on which a healthy diet is built.

- Grains, fruits and vegetables provide fibre and important vitamins and minerals. Increasing the fibre in your diet may help with your blood glucose control.
- To increase fibre, choose whole grain breads, bran cereal and brown rice.
- Use whole-wheat and whole grain flours in cooking and baking.
- Cooked beans are an excellent source of fibre.
- Make changes in your eating habits to include more fresh fruits and vegetables. Choose whole fruits with edible seeds and skin rather than drinking juice.
- Add more raw vegetables to your diet and choose dark green leafy and dark yellow vegetables.

Use the **Food Pyramid** on the next page to help guide you with your food choices and serving sizes.



# HEALTHY MEAL PLANNING

## FATS, SWEETS, ALCOHOL (CHOOSE SELDOM)

A serving is:

Fats

1 tsp. butter, margarine, oil or mayonnaise

1 tbsp. salad dressing

Sweets

1/2 cup ice cream, 1 tbsp. jam or jelly

2 small biscuits

1/2 cup sweetened gelatin



## MILK (2-3 SERVINGS PER DAY)

A serving is:

1 cup of non-fat or low-fat milk

1 cup of non-fat or low-fat yogurt



## VEGETABLES (3-5 SERVINGS PER DAY)

A serving is:

1 cup of raw vegetables

1/2 cup cooked vegetables

1/2 cup tomato or

vegetable juice



## GRAINS, BEANS, STARCHY VEGETABLES (6 OR MORE SERVINGS PER DAY)

A serving is:

1/2 cup cooked cereal, pasta, bulgar or rice

1/2 cup cooked beans, lentils, peas or corn

1 slice bread

1/2 small bagel, pitta bread, hot dog or hamburger bun

1 6-inch tortilla or 4-6 crackers

3/4 cup dry cereal (unsweetened)

1 small potato, 1/3 cup sweet potato or yam

## THE FOOD PYRAMID HELPS

Provided as an educational resource

Learn about the  
different food groups  
and their recommended  
number of servings.

**MEATS, OTHERS (2-3 SERVINGS PER DAY)**

A serving is:

- 1/2 to 3/4 cup tuna or low-fat cottage cheese
  - 2-3 oz. cooked lean meat, chicken or fish
  - 1 oz. cheddar or processed cheese
  - 2 tbsp. peanut butter\*, 1 egg\*
- \*Equal to 1 oz. meat



**FRUITS (2-4 SERVINGS PER DAY)**

A serving is:

- 1 small fresh fruit
- 1/2 cup canned fruit
- 1/4 cup dried fruit
- 1/2 cup fruit juice



**INGS PER DAY)**



**S YOU BUILD HEALTHY MEALS**

# HEALTHY MEAL PLANNING

## Milk

Milk provides carbohydrate, protein and fat in your diet. The fat in whole and 2% milk products is called “saturated”, and raises cholesterol levels (see the next section on Fats).



- Choose milk and milk products that are skimmed or semi-skimmed.
- Yogurt with added sugar will have a higher carbohydrate content than plain or artificially sweetened yogurt.
- Use low-lactose or lactose-free milk if you have problems digesting ordinary milk.

## Meat

The meat group provides mostly protein and fat. Reducing your intake of meat and meat



products will help lower the saturated fat and cholesterol in your diet. A serving size is about 2-3 ounces. This is the size of a deck of playing cards. Choose lean cuts of beef and pork and eat

fish and poultry more often.

- Trim visible fat and remove skin before cooking.
- Eggs and cheese are also in the meat group.
- Limit egg yolks to three per week and choose low fat cheeses.
- Eat less high-fat cooked meats, sausage and offal.

## Fats

It is important to eat less fat of all types. A diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol will help reduce your risk of heart disease. Saturated fat is usually solid at room temperature and is found mostly in foods that come from animals.

Butter, lard, bacon, poultry skin and the fat in whole milk products are examples. Other fats that are saturated include solid shortening, coconut oil and palm oil.



- Try cooking with less fat or use a cooking spray.
- Bake or grill meats, avoid adding sauces or gravy and remove animal skin or fat before cooking.
- Choose low fat salad dressings and mayonnaise.
- When fat is used in cooking, choose olive oil and use sparingly.
- Olive oil is mainly monounsaturated fat and is low in saturated fat.

# HEALTHY MEAL PLANNING

## Sweets

Foods that are high in sugar are often high in fat and calories and low in vitamins and minerals, providing very little



nutrient value. Watch the serving size and include the carbohydrate from sweet foods in your meal plan.

Most “sugar-free” desserts contain other kinds of sweeteners and may still have a lot of carbohydrate. Check the food label and work the carbohydrate from “sugar-free” foods into your meal plan. You may find that the amount of carbohydrate in a “sugar-free” dessert is the same as the regular dessert.

Beverages containing sugar have large amounts of carbohydrate. Better choices are beverages that are sugar-free and have no carbohydrate, such as sparkling flavoured water and diet soft drinks.

Many shops sell “diabetic foods” which is very expensive and limited in range. You can achieve more cost effective (and tasty) results using normal foods.

## Alcohol

If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Alcohol is harmful when consumed in excess. Alcohol may interfere with diabetes medications and cause

hypoglycemia. It is recommended you

talk with your healthcare professional about drinking





## ARE YOU TIRED OF EATING THE SAME FOODS EACH DAY?

**If you**

**always eat:**

**Try:**

Apples

- Bananas, cherries, berries, grapes, grapefruit, oranges, papayas, mangoes or plums

White bread

- Whole wheat and granary breads, flour tortillas, small bagels and pitta

Green beans

- Kale, carrots, courgettes or cauliflower

Corn oil

- Olive oil or low-fat salad dressing

Remember to use your meal plan as a guide to help you decide on the proper portion size.



# HEALTHY MEAL PLANNING

alcohol.

## Resources for Meal Planning:

Successful meal planning can be overwhelming! For help you can...

- Team up with a dietitian or your practice nurse

A dietitian can help you develop a meal plan that will work for you. Make sure you let the dietitian know which foods you enjoy – and don't enjoy – as well as your schedule for eating meals. Plan to visit with your dietitian several times to “fine tune” a meal plan to best meet your needs or

- Log on to the Internet:

If you have access to a computer with an Internet connection, go to [www.bayercarediabetes.com](http://www.bayercarediabetes.com) for help with meal planning. The interactive menu feature “What's in My Cabinet?” found in the “Diabetes Care” section lets you choose your favourite foods and lets you know when you have put together a healthy meal. It's easy, and you can print out your



menus to refer to in the supermarket or kitchen.

## References

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Healthy meal planning can be difficult when you are unsure of which combination of foods to eat, how large the serving sizes should be, and what effect different foods have on your blood glucose levels. But you can improve your blood glucose control by making food choices that build healthy meals. A meal plan lets you know when to eat, how much to eat and what kinds of food to eat for meals and snacks. Meal plans help you eat a variety of foods from one day to the next... and that's what healthy eating is all about. Just remember – the power to manage your diabetes is in your hands.

For more information about our Ascensia™ diabetes product range call Ascensia™ DIABETES SUPPORT on 0845-600-6030

You can also visit our web site at:  
[www.ascensia.co.uk](http://www.ascensia.co.uk)



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