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Tips for managing blood sugar with nutrition



Nutrition

More than 130 million adults are living with diabetes or prediabetes in the United States. What you eat can play a huge role in managing or preventing type 2 diabetes. A healthy diet can help keep your blood sugars in a healthy range and maintain a healthy weight. Each time you eat, aim to balance your plate with the following tips:

Protein

Roughly 1/4 of your plate should be filled with protein. You can consume a variety of protein, including both animal- and plant-based sources. Fish and poultry are good choices, as well as Greek yogurt and cheese. Tofu, beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds are a few plant-based options.

Carbohydrates or starches

Roughly 1/4 of your plate should include starchy vegetables and grains. A few whole grain options are oats, brown rice, quinoa, or 100% whole wheat bread and pasta. Fruit is also a carbohydrate. Whole fruits are better than fruit juice, as fruit contains fiber to help balance blood sugar. If you include fruit juice, canned fruit, or dried fruit, choose varieties with no added sugars.

Non-starchy vegetables

The more color the better. Close to 1/2 of your plate should include salad greens, bell peppers, broccoli, radishes, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, or onions, to name a few. These foods are high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber. They can fill you up, and generally contain fewer calories and carbohydrates.

Healthy fats

Dietary fat helps your body absorb beneficial fat-soluble nutrients from your food, so it's important to include heart-healthy fats in your meals and snacks throughout the day. Aim for heart-healthy fats such as nuts, seeds, avocados, fatty fish, and extra virgin olive oil. Fat adds great flavor to meals and helps you feel full for a longer amount of time.

Many people are at risk for diabetes and don't even know it. Visit with your primary care provider regularly for important screenings and to develop a treatment plan that is right for you. While getting a diagnosis of diabetes or prediabetes can feel scary and overwhelming, it is important to know that these conditions can be managed. You can still live a full, healthy, and happy life.



Lifestyle changes to help prevent and control diabetes

All individuals can benefit from trying these lifestyle habits:

-  Choose healthy, whole foods over processed foods.
-  Prepare meals at home instead of eating out.
-  Get at least 30 minutes of exercise five days a week.
-  Manage stress levels.
-  Get seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

Nutrition

The benefits of dietary fiber

The benefits of eating an adequate amount of fiber are endless. Studies have shown that eating a high-fiber diet likely reduces the risk of colorectal cancer. Consuming high-fiber foods can also help lower blood pressure and reduce inflammation. Fiber-rich foods generally include beneficial vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Eating the right amount of fiber can also promote regular bowel movements and maintain overall digestive health.

It is recommended that adult females consume about 25 grams of fiber per day, and adult males consume about 38 grams of fiber per day. Foods that can help you achieve this fiber intake goal include whole grains, a variety of fruits and vegetables, beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds. Aim for whole food sources of fiber over fiber supplements as much as possible.

There are different types of fiber, including both soluble and insoluble sources. Soluble fiber dissolves in water and can help lower cholesterol and glucose levels. A few examples of foods with soluble fiber are oats, peas, beans, apples, citrus fruits, and carrots. Insoluble fiber promotes the movement of material through your digestive system. Whole-wheat flour, wheat bran, nuts, and certain vegetables such as cauliflower, green beans, and potatoes, are good sources of insoluble fiber.



A healthy, balanced diet that includes various sources of fiber can help reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Fiber improves blood sugar levels by slowing the absorption of sugar into the blood when carbohydrates are consumed. Fiber-rich foods also help you stay full longer and feel satisfied with smaller portions. Berries, almonds, and popcorn are great high-fiber snack choices.

Don't forget to drink plenty of water, especially when you increase your fiber intake. Fiber can be harder to digest when you aren't used to it, so increase your intake gradually to avoid any discomfort and allow your body to adjust. Always consult your primary care provider about your personal nutritional needs before beginning a new diet.

Source: MayoClinic.org

Additional resources

Create a healthy meal plan using new [recipes](#) this month.

Watch this [video](#) about five super foods you should consider eating.

Consider these [tips](#) for healthy eating on a budget.

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Food diary

The types of foods and beverages you consume in a day may surprise you! You can identify your good habits, such as eating three daily meals and choosing healthy snacks, and your bad habits, such as unhealthy snacking and drinking mostly sugary drinks. Use the space below to record what you eat and drink in a single day to help you improve your eating habits tomorrow.

Breakfast	
Lunch	
Dinner	
Snacks	
Beverages	