

Diet Guidelines for Diabetes

INTRODUCTION

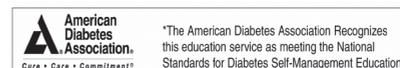
Cigna Medical Group knows the importance of maintaining a healthy diet, especially if you have been diagnosed with diabetes. And while there is no one diet for diabetes, the ideal diet for each person is determined over time, depending on individual blood sugar and other test results, as well as weight control goals. A Cigna Medical Group diabetes educator can help you develop your individual food plan.

Spacing and timing of your meals is an important first step. Most people need to eat at least 3 meals a day and may also eat one to three snacks. To help keep your blood sugar from getting too low, eat at least every four to five hours. To keep your blood sugar from getting too high, avoid eating too much at one time.

Taking care of your diabetes will mean updating, and possibly changing your diet. You may need to make adjustments to your current eating habits. To keep you updated and on the right track, stay in touch with your doctor, diabetes educator and other members of your health care team. Your health care team at Cigna Medical Group is available for you every step of the way.

Avoid alcohol or discuss its use with your health care team.

To learn more or to schedule an appointment with one of our diabetes educators, please call **623.876.2355**.



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HOW MUCH SHOULD I EAT?

- Most foods raise blood sugars somewhat. However, foods that contain carbohydrates have the greatest impact on blood sugar test results. Breads, starchy foods, fruits, milk and sweets contain carbohydrates.
- To test the effect of a meal on your blood sugar, test your blood before you eat and about two hours later. A normal increase from a meal is 40 to 50 points. More than this could mean that you ate too many carbohydrates.
- Most people who have diabetes should follow the same protein guidelines as people without diabetes. Four to six ounces of lean beef, pork, poultry or fish per day is the general recommendation.
- Limiting the use of fats and oils is recommended for most people, including those with diabetes.
- There are many vegetables and other foods that can be consumed in generous amounts.

HOW CAN I COUNT PORTION SIZE?

Some people find it easier to understand a “portion” if they think of it as money. Each “portion” equals one dollar (\$1): for example, if you ate three portions at a meal, then you spent \$3.



Use this guide to play the “portion” money game. Your diabetes educator will help you set your budget. (\$2 – \$4 per meal is a good place to start.)

You may spend \$_____ to \$_____ each meal. (Remember to eat three meals a day.)

You may spend \$_____ to \$_____ each snack.

CARBOHYDRATE FOODS:

Most people should eat at least two to four portions of carbohydrate foods per meal. Blood sugar tests will help determine how much is right for you. Each portion listed below contains 15 grams of carbohydrate. Two to four portions would provide 30 - 60 grams of carbohydrate.

- Breads, Grains and Starches

1 slice bread (1 ounce)	½ small bagel, English muffin or pita bread
½ hamburger or hotdog bun	1 (6-inch) tortilla
4 – 6 crackers	¾ cup dry, unsweetened cereal
½ cup cooked cereal	½ cup cooked beans, lentils, peas or corn
⅓ cup cooked pasta or rice	1 small potato (½ cup or 3 oz.)
1 cup winter squash	½ cup sweet potato or yam

- Fruits

Try to eat 2 – 4 fresh fruit portions daily, preferably as snacks:

½ cup canned fruit	¼ cup dried fruit
1 small fresh fruit	½ medium banana
1 cup melon or ¾ cup blueberries	½ cup fruit juice*

*Fruit juice can add up quickly.

- Milk:

1 cup “lite” yogurt	1 cup fat free or 1% milk
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- Sweets:*

½ cup ice cream	½ cup sugar-free pudding
2 small cookies	2" square cake, no icing

*Most sweets also have added fat and calories.

FREE FOODS:

Most vegetables can (and should) be eaten in generous amounts. They cause little or no increase in blood sugar.

Artichokes	Celery	Pea pods
Asparagus	Cucumbers	Peppers
Bean sprouts	Eggplant	Spinach
Beets	Greens	String beans
Broccoli	Lettuce	Summer squash
Cabbage	Mushrooms	Tomatoes
Carrots	Onions	Turnips
Cauliflower	Parsley	Zucchini

OTHER FOODS OR BEVERAGES WITH LITTLE OR NO AFFECT ON BLOOD SUGAR:

Artificial sweeteners	Garlic/onion powder	Low-sodium seasonings
Butter buds	Gelatin, sugar-free	Mustard
Coffee or tea	Gum, sugar-free	Sparkling water
Cooking spray	Herbs & spices	Tabasco sauce
Diet soda	Lemon/lime juices	Vinegar
Flavoring extracts	Low-sodium bouillon	Wine used for cooking