

Introduction to Meal Planning

Improving your diet is one of the most important things you can do to help keep your blood sugar under control.

The perfect plan for you should include a wide variety of foods at every meal, reasonable portions to help maintain your weight, and a preference for foods rich in vitamins, minerals, and fiber instead of processed food. It should also include foods you have a passion for, so you don't feel like you're depriving yourself.

GO AHEAD AND EAT, BUT EAT RIGHT

You don't have to completely avoid your favorite foods just because you have diabetes. You simply have to eat less of certain foods and more of others. And counting the carbohydrates (carbs) and/or calories in the foods you eat is one way to make sure you stay within your limits.

DAILY SERVINGS

Your healthcare team can tell you how many calories and carbohydrates you should eat based on your age, weight, activity, and glucose level.

One of the best ways to control your blood sugar is to focus on your carb servings for each meal.

One carb serving is equal to 15 grams of carbohydrates.

Most men can set a goal of 4 – 5 carb servings per meal, and most women can aim for 3 – 4 carb servings per meal, but ask your healthcare team what your goal should be.

For more information on meal planning and carbohydrate counting, visit WhyInsulin.com to download a complete meal planning guide, and a detailed carbohydrate counter.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 260	Calories from Fat 120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Trans Fat 5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 660mg	28%
Total Carbohydrates 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 1g	2%
Sugars 5g	

Reading a food label

Learn to read food labels and understand the numbers on them. So let's look at a sample label and share some tips on how to use it.

Check the serving size

The portion you're planning to eat may not be the same as the serving size on the label. In this example,

if you eat two cups, you are getting twice the calories, fat, and carbohydrates listed on the label.

Count the total carbohydrates

Total Carbohydrates 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 1g	2%
Sugars 5g	

Many people with diabetes count the carbohydrates, or carbs, in the food they eat

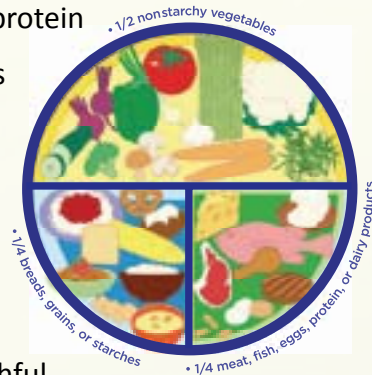
because total carb intake has the strongest impact on post-meal blood sugar levels. The **Total Carbohydrates** listed on the food label includes sugar, fiber, and complex carbohydrates. **Foods high in carbohydrates are rice, pasta, starchy vegetables such as potatoes, peas, and corn, and beans such as pinto beans and blackeyed peas, along with fruits, milk, yogurt, and sweets.**

Based on the information provided on the food label, 1 cup of this food item has 260 calories, and about 2 carb servings.

MEAL PLANNING METHODS

Some people find it helpful to create their meals using the **Plate Method**. Using this method, you would divide your plate into sections:

- 1/2 with nonstarchy vegetables
- 1/4 with lean, low-fat protein
- 1/4 with carbohydrates



HEALTHY SUBSTITUTIONS

A lot of the foods you cook or order every day can be made more healthful. Instead of eating less of a bad thing, try replacing it with something that's better for you. For example:

Instead of...	Try...
Candy bar	Strawberries with low-fat chocolate whipped topping
French fries	Small baked potato with reduced-fat sour cream
Fried chicken	Roasted chicken
Fried fish sticks	Broiled salmon
Fried rice	Brown rice with black beans
Potato chips	Whole-wheat pretzels
Sugary cereal	Whole-grain cereal with fresh fruit

If you want help creating your meal plan, you can turn to a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) or a Registered Dietitian (RD) with experience working with people who have diabetes. To find a CDE near you, go to www.aadenet.org. To find an RD near you, visit the American Diabetes Association at www.diabetes.org.

Sample Meals

Here are some suggestions for a day's worth of tasty meals and snacks that provide an example of carb counting:

Sample Meal	Carb Serving
Breakfast	
Egg-white omelet with:	0
low-fat cheese	0
spinach, mushrooms, onions	1
1 slice whole wheat toast	0
1 teaspoon light margarine spread	1
2/3 cup light yogurt	1
1/2 grapefruit	0
Coffee with artificial sweetener	3

Total Carbs

Lunch

Turkey sandwich:	2
2 slices rye bread	0
2 oz lean turkey breast	0
tomato, lettuce	0
low-fat cheese	0
light mayonnaise	1
Small apple	0
Diet beverage	3

Total Carbs

Dinner

Broiled salmon:	0
3 oz salmon with chopped onion	0
2 teaspoons canola oil	0
Whole wheat dinner roll	1
Mixed greens with olive oil and vinegar	0
2/3 cup brown rice	2
1 packet sugar-free chocolate pudding	1

Total Carbs

Snacks (optional)

1. 1/2 cup cottage cheese	
1/2 cup canned pineapple (in natural juice)	

Total = 1 Carb

2. 2 teaspoons peanut butter	
1/2 cup apple slices	

Total = 1 Carb