

- Diabetes / Diet

## Eating right for diabetics

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A DIABETIC diet is a healthy eating plan that is high in nutrients while being low in fat and calories. In reality, a diabetic diet is the optimal eating plan for the majority of people. If you were recently diagnosed with diabetes or were previously diagnosed but are now ready to undertake dietary changes, the idea of giving up foods you enjoy may be daunting. However, a proper diabetic diet is not as difficult as you think – and you can still enjoy food while managing this condition. A nutritious diet is an important component of a successful diabetes control plan. Here are five dietary habits for diabetic people.



### 1 Eat healthy carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are broken down into blood glucose during digestion. You should focus on healthy carbohydrates such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes such as beans and peas, and low-fat dairy products. Avoid less healthy carbohydrates like food and drinks with extra fats, sweets, and salt.

### 1 Choose healthier fats

The body requires fats in the diet because it provides energy. However, different types of fat have distinct effects on our health. Unsalted nuts, seeds, avocados, oily salmon, olive oil, rapeseed oil and sunflower oil contain healthy fats. Some saturated fats can raise your blood cholesterol levels, increasing the risk of heart disease. These are mostly found in animal products and prepared foods such as cookies, pastries made from red and processed meat, lard and more. It is good to limit your use of oils in general, so try grilling, steaming or baking instead.

### 1 Eat more vegetables and fruits

Despite the presumption that sugar in fruits should be avoided by diabetics, whole fruit is excellent for people with diabetes. Fruits do contain sugar; however, it is natural sugar. This is different from added sugar, also known as free sugars which are found in foods such as chocolate, cookies, and cakes. Fruit drinks, on the other hand, have additional sugar, so eat whole fruits instead. This can be either fresh, frozen, dried, or canned in juice. It is also advisable to spread your consumption throughout

the day rather than eating a large piece of fruit all at once.

Cut down on sugar

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When trying to cut back on sugar, small practical adjustments are an excellent place to start.

Swapping sugary beverages, energy

drinks, and fruit juices for water, plain milk, or sugar-free tea and coffee is a good place to start. Eliminating these additional sugars will help you regulate your blood glucose levels and lose weight. However, if you are experiencing frequent hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar), you should consult your doctor.

When you have diabetes, nutrition is an important aspect of living a healthy lifestyle. Following a nutritious food plan and being active can help you keep your blood glucose level within your target range. To control your blood glucose levels, you must balance what you eat and drink with physical exercise and, if necessary, diabetic medication. What, when and how much you eat are all important factors in keeping your blood glucose level within the range recommended by your healthcare provider.