

# Diabetes: Food for thought

Healthy eating for diabetes follows the same healthy eating guidelines as recommended for everyone. You and your whole family can eat the same healthy meals.

Eating healthily can reduce the risk of you and your family members getting diabetes.

Your intake of carbohydrate foods and fat is important in the management of diabetes.

## Carbohydrate foods

- Carbohydrate foods are a great source of energy for the body.
- Carbohydrate foods are broken down into glucose.
- Choose healthy carbohydrate foods to have at each meal and snack.
- Too many carbohydrates at one time may cause high blood glucose levels.
- Not enough carbohydrates at a meal, or over the whole day, may:
  - Make you feel tired.
  - Make you miss out on important vitamins and minerals.
- Cause a low blood glucose level (or hypo).



The traditional diets of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is very healthy. It is low in fat, especially unhealthy fat, and based on lean meat and fish, plenty of vegetables, fruit and unprocessed foods. Trying to choose foods that match this will help manage your diabetes.

## Healthy carbohydrate foods include:

- Bread and breakfast cereals – choose whole grain options
- Rice and pasta (choose wholemeal pasta)
- Potato, sweet potato, taro and corn
- Legumes such as baked beans, lentils, kidney beans and split peas
- Fruit
- Milk and yoghurt – choose low fat (preferably unsweetened)



Unhealthy fats	Healthy fats
<p><b>Saturated and trans fats raise cholesterol levels and are found in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatty meat, chicken skin</li> <li>• Full fat dairy foods, butter</li> <li>• Fatty snacks e.g. chocolate, potato crisps, biscuits, pastries</li> <li>• Fried take away foods</li> <li>• Food made with palm oil or coconut products</li> <li>• Coconut milk</li> </ul>	<p><b>Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats lower cholesterol and are found in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canola and olive oils and margarines</li> <li>• Seed oils and margarines eg. sunflower, sesame or safflower oil</li> <li>• Nuts</li> <li>• Avocado</li> <li>• Fish</li> </ul>

### Fats

- Fats do not raise blood glucose levels.
- Fats eaten in excess can cause weight gain, making diabetes more difficult to manage.
- There are healthy and unhealthy fats. Healthy eating can be achieved by making just a few small changes. The following hints and tips will help you eat a healthy diet for diabetes.

### Eat less fat, especially saturated fat

- Use less butter, try a scrape of margarine instead
- Avoid fried and takeaway foods
- Trim the fat off meat and take the skin off chicken
- Eat less fatty snacks like potato crisps and biscuits
- Use low fat milk, yoghurt, cheese and ice cream

### Eat more fruit and vegetables

- Aim for two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables daily
- Fruit serve – one medium sized piece, two small pieces or 1 cup canned fruit (in natural juice)
- Vegetable serve – ½ cup cooked vegetables, 1 cup salad or one medium sized potato
- Try to eat fruit or vegetables at each meal
- Snack on fruit during the day

### Eat grainy breads and cereals

- Try to eat multigrain or wholemeal bread instead of white
- Eat high fibre cereals like wheat biscuits, porridge or bran cereals
- Eat some bread or cereal or pasta or noodles or damper or rice with each meal

### Eat and drink less sugar sweetened foods and drinks

- Drink diet cordial or diet soft drink – avoid regular sweet drinks
- Don't eat chocolate, lollies, biscuits or cakes every day

### Drink plenty of water

- 8-10 cups of water a day

### Eat regular meals

- Try to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner everyday
- If you are on certain diabetes tablets or insulin you may need snacks between your meals – ask your doctor



## Healthy Shopping List

Instead of:	Try these:
<p><b>Sweet drinks</b> Soft drink, cordials, fruit juices, sports drinks and energy drinks in large amounts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain water is the best drink. For an occasional change try diet or low-joule cordials. Limit fruit juice to half a small glass (125mls) per day.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lollies and chocolates</b> Sweet lollies, mints, chewing gum, chocolates, health bars</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fresh fruit</li> <li>Small amounts of: No added sugar gum, Sugar free lollies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cakes</b> Cakes, pastries, doughnuts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wholegrain or fruit bread, low fat high fibre crackers, small fruit scones</li> </ul>
<p><b>Butter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avocado, light cream cheese spread, poly or monounsaturated margarine like olive, canola or sunflower</li> </ul>
<p><b>Full cream milk</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low fat or skim milk Powdered skim milk (made according to instructions)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sausages, bacon, devon, fatty meats</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lean meat like leg ham, kangaroo, chicken breast, (trim fat off meat before cooking), canned salmon or tuna in springwater</li> <li>Reduced fat mince; kangaroo, beef, chicken or pork</li> </ul>
<p><b>Full fat cheese</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small amounts of reduced fat cheese</li> </ul>
<p><b>Takeaways</b> Pastries, pies, high fat treats (Don't eat everyday)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toasted sandwich, lean meat roll or a wrap with lots of salad, sushi</li> </ul>
<p><b>Chips, corn chips and crisps</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raw vegetables, plain popcorn, low fat high fibre crackers, rice cakes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fried foods</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foods that are grilled, baked, steamed, microwaved or cooked in a non-stick pan</li> <li>Small amounts of canola, sunflower or olive oil are ok</li> <li>Try spray oil</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sweet biscuits</b> Cream biscuits, chocolate biscuits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruit bread or wholegrain toast</li> <li>Low fat fruit filled biscuits occasionally</li> </ul>
<p><b>Desserts</b> Fruit pies, puddings, ice cream, cakes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fresh fruit</li> <li>Low fat yoghurt (preferably unsweetened)</li> <li>Low fat ice cream occasionally</li> <li>Canned fruit in natural juice</li> </ul>

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## An Example Meal Plan

### Breakfast

- 1/2 cup high fibre breakfast cereal with 1/2–1 cup low fat milk and a serve of fruit OR
- 2 slices bread or toast (multigrain is better) with ½ cup baked beans, tomato/mushrooms. For something different try scrambled, poached or boiled eggs\* on your toast OR
- 1–2 slices bread or toast (multigrain is better) with a scrape of jam, honey, vegemite or margarine, and a serve of fruit

### Lunch

- 2 slices bread or 1 bread roll (multigrain is better) with salad and a small serve of lean meat, skinless chicken, canned fish in springwater or low fat cheese AND
- Fruit or 100–200g low fat yoghurt

### Dinner

- Small amount of lean meat, chicken or fish (no bigger than the size of your palm)
- AND
- ½ cup cooked rice or ½ cup cooked pasta or 1–2 slices bread (multigrain is better) or 1–2 medium potatoes or ½ cup corn/sweet potato/taro AND
  - Lots of salad or vegetables AND
  - ½ cup canned fruit (in natural juice) and a dollop of low fat yoghurt or low fat custard

### Snacks

Try fruit or 200g low fat yoghurt or plain popcorn or low fat crackers with healthy topping (e.g. tomato) or a slice of multigrain bread/toast or fruit bread/toast.

## Reading food labels

### What to look for?

Look at the '100 gram' column on the nutrition label to compare foods.

**Fat:** Pick the foods that are lower in fat, especially saturated fat.

**Sugar:** If sugar (glucose, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, maltose, honey) is first on the ingredient list then the product may not be the

best choice. Some sugar in healthy foods is ok if written later in the list.

**Fibre:** Pick the foods that have the most fibre. Aim for 5g or more in the 100g column or higher for bread and breakfast cereal.

**Sodium (salt):** Pick the foods with the lowest sodium. Products that say 'Salt-Reduced' or 'No Added Salt' will often be a good choice.

### NUTRITION INFORMATION

SERVINGS PER PACKAGE: 24

SERVING SIZE: 30g

	Per Serve	100 g
Energy	447kJ	1490kJ
Protein	3.5	11.7
Fat, total	0.4g	1.4g
– saturated	0.1g	0.3g
Carbohydrate		
– total	20.3	67.7g
– sugars	1.3g	4.3g
Fibre	3.1g	10.3g
Sodium	89mg	297mg

Ingredients: Whole grain wheat (96%), sugar, salt, barley malt extract, minerals (zinc, iron), vitamins (niacin, thiamine, riboflavin, folate)



### “Hands on Country”

This painting was created for Australian Diabetes Council by artist Chris Tobin, a Dharug man, and a traditional custodian in the Blue Mountains region. In the artist's words: “The central part of this painting represents the relationship of the clan – it's a unity of people looking out for each other while living independent lives.”

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