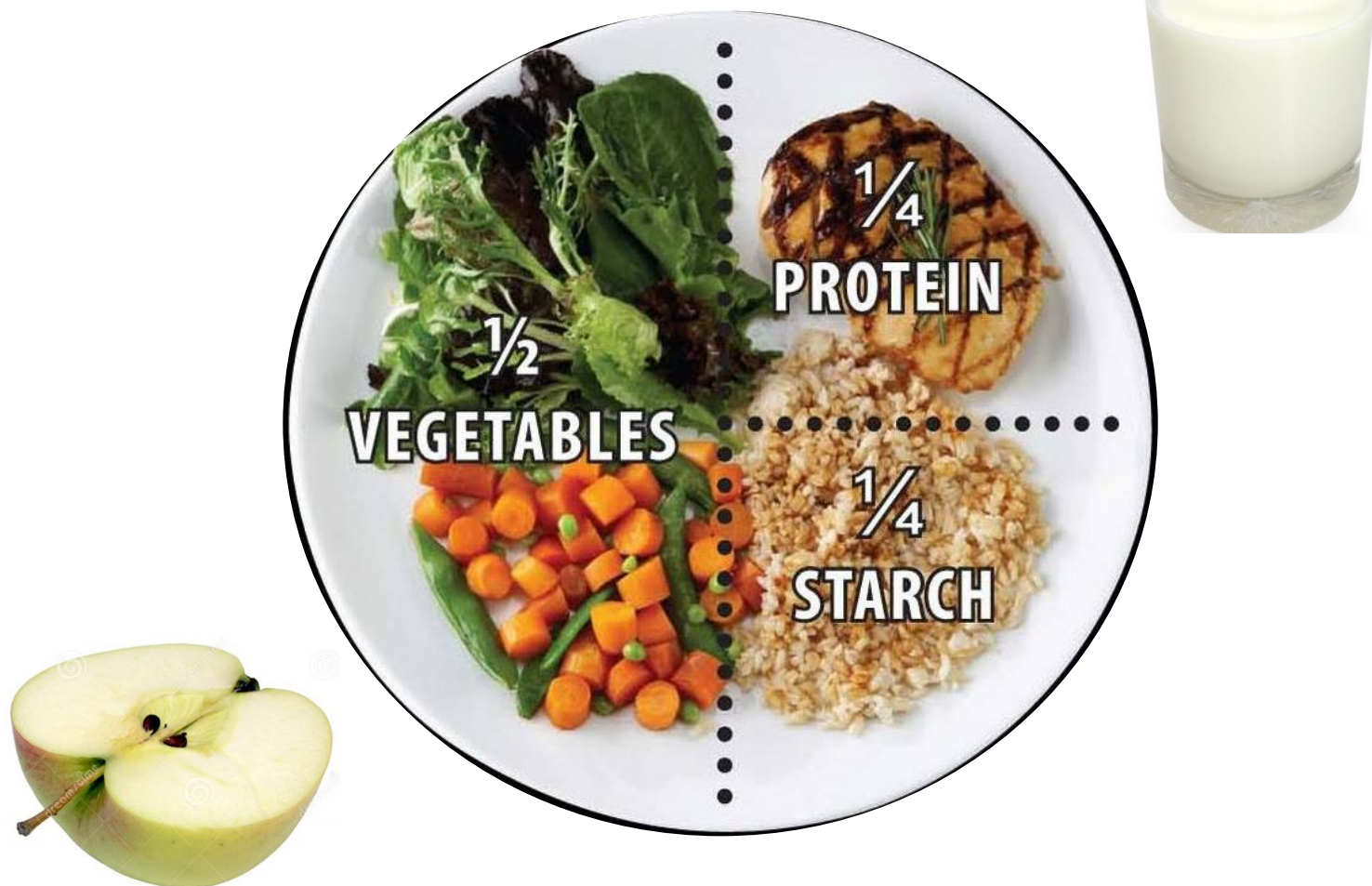# Healthy Eating and Diabetes

Healthy eating is important for keeping your blood sugar in control.  Choose My Plate is a great tool to help you add variety to your meals and to get the right balance of nutrients.

**Follow these steps to create your healthy plate:**

1. Imagine a line down the middle of your plate.  Then divide one side in half again so you have three sections on your plate.
2. Fill the biggest section with non-starchy vegetables.
3. Fill one of the small sections with grains and starchy foods.
4. Fill the other small section with protein.
5. Add a serving of fruit and a serving of dairy.

**Use these foods to help you fill your plate:**

| PROTEIN | |
|---|---|
| ▪ Beans and lentils | ▪ Cheese |
| ▪ Nuts and seeds | ▪ Chicken |
| ▪ Fish | ▪ Turkey |
| ▪ Seafood | ▪ Beef |
| ▪ Eggs | ▪ Pork |
| ▪ Hummus | ▪ Soy nuggets or burgers |

| STARCH (GRAINS AND STARCHY FOODS) | |
|---|---|
| ▪ Calabaza | ▪ Chayote or winter squash |
| ▪ Green peas | ▪ Corn |
| ▪ Yucca | ▪ Plantain |
| ▪ Sweet potato or yams | ▪ Tortilla |
| ▪ Quinoa | ▪ Pasta |
| ▪ White or brown rice | ▪ Potatoes (white, yellow, red) |

| VEGETABLES (NON-STARCHY) | |
|---|---|
| ▪ Chilies and jalapeños | ▪ Nopales |
| ▪ Cabbage | ▪ Carrots |
| ▪ Cauliflower | ▪ Eggplant |
| ▪ Jicama | ▪ Broccoli |
| ▪ Peppers (red, yellow, green, orange) | ▪ Tomatoes |
| | ▪ Spinach |

# MORE TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING

- **Try a bowl instead of a plate**—stews and soups can be a great way to get a healthy variety and balance of nutrients!  Just keep the same proportion of each food group that you would if using The Plate Method.

- **Eat regular meals**—work with your health team to make a meal plan.  Eat your meals and snacks at about the same time each day.

- **Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables**—eating foods that are different colors, like red, green, and orange, gives your body different nutrients.  You can also eat a mixture of frozen, canned, and fresh foods to add variety to your plate.

- **Eat less fat**—stay away from fried foods.  Eat foods that are baked, broiled, steamed, or grilled.  Choose meats that have little fat (lean meats).  Choose dairy products that are "low-fat" or "no fat."  Choose low-fat salad dressings, mayonnaise, butter, and cheeses to add flavor to your foods.  A low-fat food has less than 3 grams of fat per 100 calories.

- **Eat more whole grains**—eating whole grains helps control your blood sugar level.  Eat more high-fiber foods, like vegetables, dried beans, and fruit.

- **Eat less salt**—eating less salt (also called sodium) helps control your blood pressure.  Use less salt when you cook and eat fewer processed foods.  Use herbs and spices, garlic, and onion to season foods or use seasoning blends like Mrs. Dash ®.

- **Drink water**—instead of sugary drinks.  Use slices of fruit to add flavor to your water.

# READING NUTRITION FACTS LABELS

Knowing how to read a nutrition label can also help you make healthy eating choices:

- Pay attention to the **serving size**.  The portion that you plan to eat may not be the same as the serving size listed on the nutrition label.  See page 17 for easy ways to get the right serving size.
- **Total carbohydrate** includes sugar, fiber, and complex carbohydrates.  Most women need between 45 and 60 grams of carbohydrates per meal and most men need between 60 and 75 grams of carbohydrates per meal.  Eat 15 to 20 grams of carbohydrates per snack.  Talk to your health care provider to learn how many carbohydrates you should eat with each meal and snack.
- The **% Daily Value** is the percentage of nutrients in one serving of food that the FDA recommends you should have on a daily basis (based on a 2,000 calorie diet).  Any value of 20% or more is high.  Any value of 5% or less is low.

Serving Size →

% Daily Value ←

Total Carbohydrate →

## Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1/2 cup (126g)
Servings Per Container About 3

**Amount Per Serving**

**Calories** 130     Calories from Fat 15

| | % Daily Value* |
|---|---|
| **Total Fat** 1.5g | 2% |
| Saturated Fat 0g | 0% |
| Trans Fat 0g | |
| **Cholesterol** 0mg | 0% |
| **Sodium** 300mg | 13% |
| **Total Carbohydrate** 23g | 8% |
| Dietary Fiber 8g | 32% |
| Sugars  5g | |
| **Protein** 7g | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vitamin A 0% | • | Vitamin C 0% |
| Calcium  6% | • | Iron  15% |

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

# COUNTING CARBOHYDRATES

"**Carb counting**" is one tool to help you manage your diabetes. "Carb" is short for *carbohydrates*, which are sugars and starches found in many foods. Foods with lots of carbs raise your blood sugar level. If you eat too many carbs at a meal, your blood sugar is likely to be high even several hours after eating.

Carb counting helps you keep track of how many carbs you are eating. You and your health care team should work together to set a limit for how many carbs you should eat with each meal and snack. In general, a diabetic man should eat 15 to 60 grams of carbs per meal. Diabetic women should eat 15 to 45 grams of carbs per meal.

Reading the nutrition label on packaged food is one way to find out how many carbs you are eating.

Or, you can use the food lists on pages 14–16 of this book. Check the lists to find steamed vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots), cornbread, pork, milk, and apple – then fill in the blanks below!

**For these charts: g = grams, oz = ounces, c = cups, Tbsp = Tablespoons, tsp = teaspoons,     sm = small, and med = medium.**

| | "Starchy" Vegetables | Size | Carb (g) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **"Starchy" vegetables have more carbohydrates than "non-starchy" vegetables.** | Baked potatoes | 3 oz | 18 g |
| | Corn   (cooked) | ½ c | 16 g |
| | French fries | 4 oz | 47 g |
| | Green peas | ½ c | 16 g |
| | Mashed potatoes | ½ c | 19 g |
| | Sweet potatoes | ½ c | 19 g |
| | Tater tots | 9 pieces | 20 g |

| | "Non-Starchy" Vegetables | Size | Carb (g) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **"Non-starchy" vegetables have small amounts of carbs and should be chosen whenever possible.**<br><br>**Vegetables may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried and may be whole or cut up.  When choosing canned, select low-sodium when possible.** | Asparagus , spears | 6 med | 4 g |
| | Broccoli ,cooked | ½ c | 6 g |
| | Cabbage, cooked | 1 c | 7 g |
| | Carrots, raw | 1 med | 6 g |
| | Cauliflower, cooked | ½ c | 4 g |
| | Collard greens, cooked | ½ c | 6 g |
| | Cucumbers, raw | 1 c | 4 g |
| | Eggplant, cooked | ½ c | 5 g |
| | Green beans | ½ c | 5 g |
| | Green onions, Leeks | ½ c | 5 g |
| | Lettuce, all types | 1 c | 4 g |
| | Mushrooms, cooked | ½ c | 4 g |
| | Okra, cooked | 1 c | 8 g |
| | Onions, raw | ¼ c | 4 g |
| | Spinach, cooked | 1 c | 6 g |
| | Summer squash | ½ c | 4 g |
| | Tomatoes | 1 med | 7 g |
| | Turnips, cooked | 1 c | 8 g |

| | Beans and Lentils | Size | Carb (g) | Fiber (g) | Carbs you count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Beans and lentils are high in fiber and protein.  If the food has 7g or more of fiber, you can subtract the grams of fiber from the total grams of carbohydrate to figure out how many carbohydrates to count.*** | Baked beans | 1/3 c | 17 g | 5 g | 17 g |
| | Black beans | ½ c | 20 g | 8 g | 12 g |
| | Great Northern | ½ c | 19 g | 6 g | 19 g |
| | Lentils | ½ c | 15 g | 8 g | 7 g |
| | Lima beans | ½ c | 18 g | 8 g | 10 g |
| | Pinto beans | ½ c | 22 g | 7 g | 15 g |
| | Refried beans | ½ c | 17 g | 6 g | 17 g |

**\*For Example:**          **Black beans = 20g carbs – 8 g fiber = 12 g of carb per ½ cup**

Grains include breads, rice, and cereals.  Grains can be whole grains or refined grains.

Whole grains-contain the entire grain seed. At least ½ of the grains that you eat should be whole grains.

Refined grains are missing one or more parts of the grain seed and therefore contain less fiber and other important nutrients.

| Grains | Size | Carb (g) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Bagel, large  3 ½ inch | 1 bagel | 56 g |
| Bread, white or wheat | 1 slice | 15 g |
| Cereal, Cheerios | 1 c | 21 g |
| Cereal, cooked | ½ c | 23 g |
| Cornbread | 2" square | 28 g |
| Crackers , graham | 3 squares | 18 g |
| Crackers, saltines | 2 squares | 14 g |
| English muffin | 1 | 25 g |
| Granola (low fat) | ½ c | 30 g |
| Grits | ½ c | 16 g |
| Pancakes, 4 inch | 2 sm | 12 g |
| Pasta | 1 c | 45 g |
| Popcorn, popped | 3 c | 11 g |
| Quinoa, cooked | ½ c | 24 g |
| Rice, white or brown | 1 c | 45 g |
| Syrup, lite | 1 Tbsp | 6 g |
| Tofu | ½ c | 2 g |
| Tortilla, corn or flour | 1 (4 inch) | 15 g |

Fruits may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried and may be whole or cut up.  When choosing canned fruits, select fruit canned in water instead of those canned in syrup.

| Fruits | Size | Carbs (g) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Apple, raw | 1 sm | 15 g |
| Applesauce, natural | ½ c | 14 g |
| Banana | 4 inches | 19 g |
| Blackberries | 1 c | 14 g |
| Blueberries | ¾ c | 16 g |
| Cantaloupe | 1 c | 14 g |
| Cherry | 6 med | 7 g |
| Coconut | ½ c | 9 g |
| Dates | 3 dates | 19 g |
| Grapefruit | ½ | 13 g |
| Grapes | 15 grapes | 15 g |
| Honeydew melon | 3 oz | 20 g |
| Mango | 1 sm | 24 g |
| Oranges | 1 sm | 15 g |
| Papaya | 1 sm | 17 g |
| Peach | 1 med | 14 g |
| Pear | 1 sm | 23 g |
| Pineapple | ¾ c | 15 g |
| Plantain, cooked | 1 c | 48 g |
| Plum | 1 med | 10 g |
| Raisins | 2 Tbsp | 14 g |
| Strawberries | 1 c | 10 g |

| Dairy foods include milk, | Dairy | Size | Carbs (g) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |

| | Milk | 1 c | 12 g |
|---|---|---|---|
| **and yogurt. Most dairy group choices should be low-fat.** | Sour cream | 2 Tbsp | 1 g |
| | Sour cream, light | 2 Tbsp | 3 g |
| | Yogurt, fruited | 6 oz | 28 g |
| | Yogurt, Greek | 6 oz | 7 g |

| | **Proteins** | **Size** | **Carbs (g)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Proteins include foods made from meat, poultry, seafood, beans, cheese, eggs, soy products, nuts and seeds. You should choose lean or low-fat meat and poultry options. You should eat a serving of protein with every meal.** | Beef, lean | 3 oz | 0 g |
| | Cheese | 1 oz | 2 g |
| | Chicken | 3 oz | 0 g |
| | Cottage cheese | 1 c | 8 g |
| | Eggs | 1 egg | 0 g |
| | Fish | 3 oz | 0 g |
| | Hot dogs | 1 | 6 g |
| | Lunch meats without glaze | 3 oz | 0 g |
| | Pork, lean | 3 oz | 0 g |
| | Sausage | 1 oz | 3 g |

| | **Fats** | **Size** | **Carbs (g)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Fats can be found in many types of foods, like dairy, protein, and grain foods. Fats are also found in oils used for cooking. If you eat too much fat, your blood glucose stays higher longer. You should choose low fat options whenever possible.** | Almonds, roasted | 12 | 4 g |
| | Bacon | 3 slices | 0 g |
| | Butter | 1 tsp | 0 g |
| | Canola oil | 1 tsp | 0 g |
| | Cream cheese | 1 Tbsp | 1 g |
| | Ice cream Sugar free | 1 bar | 10 g |
| | Margarine | 1 tsp | 0 g |
| | Mayonnaise | 1 tsp | 0 g |
| | Olive oil | 1 tsp | 0 g |
| | Olives, black | 8 olives | 2 g |
| | Peanuts, roasted | ½ c | 15 g |
| | Peanut butter | 3 Tbsp | 4 g |
| | Salad dressing | 2 Tbsp | 4 g |

# SERVING SIZES

You can use measuring cups and food scales to help you learn the correct serving sizes. Your hand can also be a helpful tool to help you decide how much of a food you should eat.

| Hand Portion | Serving Size | Food and Drink |
|---|---|---|
| Two hands, cupped | 1 cup (c) | Dry cereal, mixed dishes (stew, chili), soup, green salads |
| One hand, cupped | ½ cup (c) | Pasta, rice, mashed potatoes, beans, hot cereal, fruit salad, pudding |
| Palm of hand (woman's) | 3 ounces (oz) | Cooked meat or fish |
| Two thumbs together (women's) | 1 tablespoon (Tbsp) | Salad dressing, sour cream, cream cheese, mayonnaise, peanut butter |
| Tip of thumb (to first knuckle) | 1 teaspoon (tsp) | Margarine, oils |

**My healthy eating goal**:

_____

_____