

In Type 1 diabetes, no (or very little) insulin is released into the body. In Type 2 Diabetes, your body does not properly use insulin, a hormone that helps your body to control the level of glucose (sugar) in your blood. As a result, glucose builds up in your blood instead of being used for energy.

The key to managing blood sugar levels is managing carbohydrate intake, eating a well-balanced diet low in salt, and getting regular exercise. Here are some tips to help you make healthy choices*:

Carbohydrates

- Consult a doctor or dietitian to find out how many carbs you should be eating based on your body type.
- Try to space them out evenly among each meal and snack, this is usually around 30-60 grams at meals and 15-30 grams at snacks.
- Limit refined carbohydrates like white bread, rice, and pasta, soda, candy, packaged meals, and snack foods.
- Try to eat high-fiber complex carbohydrates (slow-release carbs), such as breads and pastas made from whole grains. They are digested more slowly, preventing your body from producing too much insulin.



*Everyone's dietary needs are different. Consult your doctor, dietitian, or diabetes educator for more information.

Fiber

- High-fiber diets can help control blood sugar and lower your "bad" (LDL) cholesterol.
- Make sure your diet contains higher amounts of soluble fiber as well as insoluble fiber.
- Examples of soluble fiber: oatmeal, nuts, beans, lentils, barley, apples, blueberries, and oranges.
- Examples of insoluble fiber: whole-wheat bread, bran, brown rice and some vegetables; also found in the seeds and skins of fruit.
- Aim for 21-25 g fiber per day for women, 30-38 grams per day for men.



Sodium

- Diabetes raises your risk of developing high blood pressure; a diet with too much salt can add to that risk. Your daily intake should be no more than 1,500-2,300 mg per day. (1 tsp. salt = 2,300 mg of sodium)
- Examples of high-sodium foods: packaged “convenience” foods, canned meats, soups and vegetables, condiments, pickled foods, and processed meats like bologna, sausage, bacon, and ham.

Fats



Eat less saturated fat

- Saturated fat raises blood cholesterol levels which increases the chances of developing heart disease; and people with diabetes are already at a high risk for developing heart disease.
- Examples of saturated fats: lard, gravy, bacon, cream, cheese, butter
- Aim for about 20g or less of saturated fat per day.

Eat more unsaturated “healthy” fats

- They can lower your bad (LDL) cholesterol.
- Examples: avocado, canola oil, nuts, seeds, olive oil and olives, peanut butter and peanut oil.
- Average recommended daily fat intake is 44-78 grams, try to make this mostly healthy fats.

Exercise!



Regular physical activity, along with healthy eating and weight control, can reduce diabetes incidence by 60%.
It is just as effective as glucose-lowering medication—*without the side effects!*

Exercise can also:

- decrease insulin resistance
- improve cholesterol and blood pressure
- help maintain weight loss
- reduce morbidity and mortality

The Canadian Diabetes Association recommends 150 minutes of aerobic exercise and three sessions of resistance exercise per week. Most people living with diabetes currently do not meet these targets.

References

- American Diabetes Association. (2017). *Facts About Type 2*. Retrieved June 06, 2017, from American Diabetes Association: <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/type-2/facts-about-type-2.html>
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