

the diabetic diet

*the diabetic diet is the healthiest diet for the whole family.
there's no need for anyone else in the family to eat differently.*

guidelines:

eat 3 meals a day, no less. you can have a low-carb snack every day.
don't take second helpings, even tiny ones. pack and put away the leftovers before you sit down to eat.
see additional handout for diabetic breakfast.

it starts with portion control, and for most of us, this is the hardest part to get used to.
for lunch and supper:

- use smaller plates (9 inches in diameter) - pack away your big plates for special occasions.
- use smaller bowls for soup and cereal (holding 1 cup when almost full).
- use small dessert dishes for fruits, yogurts, etc. (hold 1/2 cup when almost full).
- and use drinking glasses that hold 1 cup when almost full, and 1/2 cup when half full (save your big glasses for water only).

each lunch and supper has 2 vegetable servings, and 1 each of starch, protein, dairy, and fruit.
using your imagination, divide your plate in half, then divide one half in half:



fill this plate:

- 1/2 full with vegetables (NOT starchy - examples, green beans, salad, tomatoes = 2 servings)
- 1/4 full with starch (or starchy vegetable - examples, potato, macaroni, bread, corn = 1 serving)
- 1/4 full with protein (examples, meat, eggs, chicken = 1 serving)
- on the side, have 1 cup dairy (= 1 serving)
- on the side, have 1 cup or piece whole fruit OR 1/2 cup juice (= 1 serving)

what is a serving?

in general, 1 serving = 1 piece (a portion the size of a deck of playing cards)
or 1/2 cup (a portion about as much as would fill one cupped hand).

what is 1 serving vegetables?

1/2 cup sliced or chopped vegetable
or 1 cup salad greens
or 1 cup vegetable juice

what is 1 serving fruit?

1 piece whole fruit that fits in your hand
or 1 cup cut-up fruit or berries
or 1/2 cup cooked fruit (example, applesauce,
cranberry sauce, fruit compote, stewed prunes)
or 1/2 cup juice

what is 1 serving protein?

1 piece of meat/ chicken/ fish/ tofu/ tempeh/ veggie
1 burger as big as a deck of playing cards (2-3 oz)
1/2 cup cooked meat/ chicken/ fish/ tofu/ tempeh
(as much as would fill one cupped hand)
1 large egg

what is 1 serving starch?

1 slice bread, 1 tortilla
1/2 bagel or english muffin
1 piece of cornbread or biscuit, as big as a deck of
playing cards
4 saltine crackers (together, the size of playing cards)
1 regular potato or small corn on the cob
1/2 cup cooked starch (as much as would fill one
cupped hand; examples, macaroni, rice, refried or
baked beans)
1/2 cup cooked starchy vegetable (example, potato,
corn, sweet potato, winter squash)
1/2 cup cold cereal

others:

peanut butter: 1 serving is walnut-sized (2 Tb)
cream cheese, salad dressing, whipped cream:
1/2 walnut (1 Tb)

special questions

what if you're having a sandwich, burrito, taco, pita, or wrap?

1 piece of bread or tortilla counts as your starch.
your sandwich or wrap might have your dairy, protein, and half your vegetables in it as well.
(you can probably still have half your vegetable, and fruit on the side.)

what if you're having pasta with sauce? (includes macaroni and cheese, spaghetti, etc)

1/4 plate full of noodles counts as your starch.
tomato sauce counts as half your vegetables.
cream or cheese sauce counts as your dairy.
meat, chicken, or seafood in the sauce count as your protein.

what if you're having lasagne, or other casserole with pasta-sauce-cheese-meat?

1/2 plate full counts as your protein, starch, dairy, and half your vegetable. (you can still have 1/4 plate of vegetable and fruit on the side.)

what if you are having soup?

meat soup with vegetables (without potato, noodle, rice, or other starch):
 have 1 cup. counts as protein and half your vegetables. (you can still have 1/4 plate each of vegetable and starch, with dairy and fruit on the side.)

soup with vegetables only (no meat or potato, noodle, or other starch):
 have 1 cup. counts as half your vegetable. (you can still have 1/4 plate each vegetable, starch and protein, with dairy and fruit on the side.)
 otherwise, have 2 cups vegetable soup, plus 1/4 plate each protein and starch, dairy and fruit on the side.)

starchy soup with meat (noodle, rice, potato, corn, lentil, split pea, bean, or tortilla soups):
 have 1 cup. counts as your starch + protein. (you can still have 1/2 plate of vegetable with dairy and fruit on the side.)

cream soups or chowders with meat or seafood in them (example, cream of chicken soup, clam chowder):
 have 1 cup. counts as dairy + protein. (you can still have 1/2 plate vegetables and 1/4 plate starch, with dairy and fruit on the side.)

cream soups, no meat (example, cream of tomato soup, cream of mushroom soup):
 have 1 cup. counts as your dairy serving. (you can still have 1/2 plate vegetables, 1/4 plate each protein and starch, with fruit on the side.)

what if you are having vegetable with cream sauce?

starchy vegetable with creamy sauce (example, scalloped potatoes) - have 1/2 cup. counts as starch and dairy.
vegetable with creamy sauce (example, cauliflower with cheese sauce) - have 1/2 cup. counts as your dairy and half your vegetable. (can still have 1/2 plate vegetable, 1/4 plate each protein and starch, and fruit on the side.)

what if you are having a frozen dinner?

do NOT eat more than one frozen dinner.
you can probably also have 1/2 plateful of vegetable, with dairy and fruit on the side.

what are low-carb snacks?

goal is to enjoy a little flavor, not "fill up" between meals. examples:

string cheese, 1 piece	cottage cheese with fresh fruit/berries
celery and carrot sticks (1 carrot + 1 stalk)	hard boiled egg/ deviled egg
apple slices +/- peanut butter (1 apple + 2 Tb)	celery stuffed with egg salad
pretzel sticks dipped in yogurt (small handful + 1/4 c)	pickles and olives (handful each)
sunflower seeds in the shell (handful)	jerky or pepperoni
sugar free jello cup	handful of nuts (not seasoned)