

Diabetes Meal Plans and a Healthy Diet

What is a Diabetes Meal Plan?

A diabetes meal plan is a guide that tells you how much and what kinds of food you can choose to eat at meals and snack times. A good meal plan should fit in with your schedule and eating habits.

Some meal planning tools include:

- The plate method
- Carb counting
- Glycemic index.

The right meal plan will help you improve your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol numbers and also help keep your weight on track. Whether you need to lose weight or stay where you are, your meal plan can help.

Looking for meal plans? [Sign up for our Recipes for Healthy Living resource.](#)

<http://www.diabetes.org/mfa-recipes/log-in/recipes-for-healthy-living.html?loc=ff-diabetesmealplans>) **It's free!**

People with diabetes have to take extra care to make sure that their food is balanced with insulin and oral medications (if they take them), and exercise to help manage their blood glucose levels.

This might sound like a lot of work, but your doctor and/or dietitian can help you create a [meal plan](#) (<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/planning-meals/>) that is best for you. When you make healthy food choices, you will improve your overall health and you can even prevent complications such as heart disease and some cancers.

There are many ways to help you follow your diabetes meal plan. Some ways are [Creating your Plate](#) (<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/planning-meals/create-your-plate/>) or [Carbohydrate Counting](#) (<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/what-can-i-eat/understanding-carbohydrates/carbohydrate-counting.html>) . These two meal planning methods are different but hopefully one is right for you.

What is a Healthy Diet?

A healthy diet is a way of eating that reduces risk for complications such as heart disease and stroke.

Healthy eating includes eating a wide variety of foods including:

- vegetables
- whole grains
- fruits
- non-fat dairy products
- beans
- lean meats
- poultry
- fish

There is no one perfect food so including a variety of different foods and watching portion sizes is key to a healthy diet. Also, make sure your choices from each food group provide the highest quality nutrients you can find. In other words, pick foods rich in vitamins, minerals and fiber over those that are processed.

People with diabetes can eat the same foods the family enjoys. Everyone benefits from healthy eating so the whole family can take part in healthy eating. It takes some planning but you can fit your favorite foods into your meal plan and still manage your blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol.

Did you find this content to be helpful? Want to talk and share tips with others who are figuring out meal plans themselves? Visit the [American Diabetes Association Community](http://community.diabetes.org/t5/Eating-Right-with-Diabetes/bd-p/Eating-Right-with-Diabetes?loc=ff-diabetesmealplans) (<http://community.diabetes.org/t5/Eating-Right-with-Diabetes/bd-p/Eating-Right-with-Diabetes?loc=ff-diabetesmealplans>) today!

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