

Diabetes and

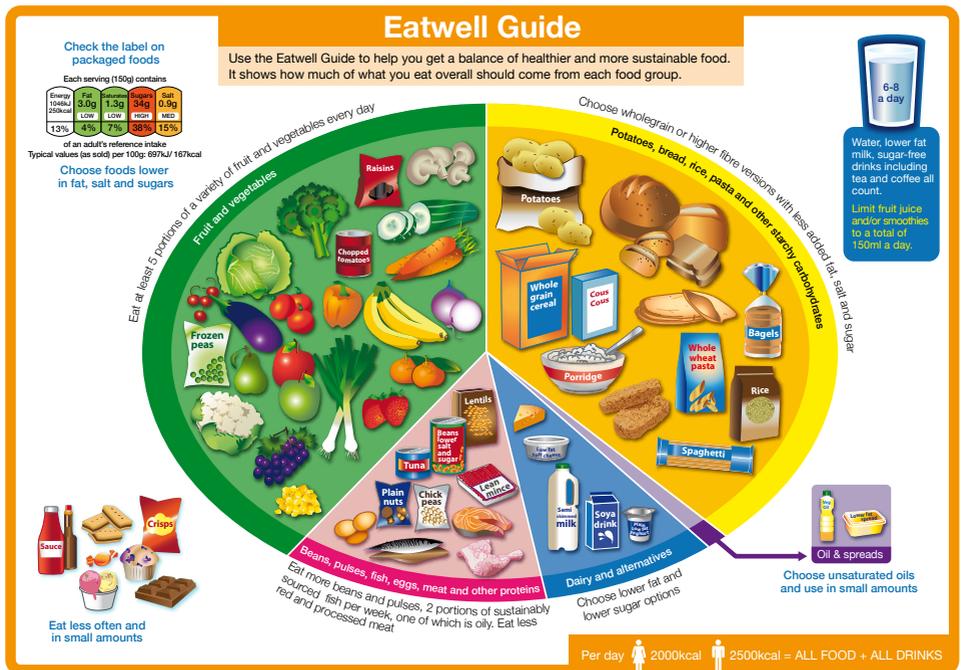
# Healthy Eating



Having diabetes means that your body is less able to control the amount of glucose (sugar) in the blood.

Food choices and eating habits are important in helping you to control your diabetes. You do not need to follow a special diet but you may need to make some changes to your current eating habits. You will be able to enjoy a healthy balanced diet, which is suitable for the whole family.

The Eatwell Guide, below, shows the food groups which make up the correct balance of foods for a healthy diet:



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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## Practical advice

### Eat regular meals

- Aim to have 3 meals a day, breakfast, lunch and dinner – space your meals out evenly over the day.
- A source of starchy carbohydrates for example; breakfast cereal, porridge, bread, potatoes, rice, pasta or chapattis should be eaten at each meal.

- Wholegrain, wholemeal or high-fibre starchy carbohydrate varieties are the healthier choice.
- Consider limiting portion sizes from the starchy carbohydrate food group if you are trying to lose weight.

### Eat less sugar and sugary foods

- Foods and drinks which are high in sugar can make your blood glucose levels rise too quickly.

<b>AVOID* foods and drinks high in sugar</b>	<b>CHOOSE foods and drinks that are low-sugar or sugar-free alternatives</b>
Sugar, sucrose, glucose, glucose syrup, dextrose.	Sweeteners – Canderel, Sweetex, Splenda, Hermesetas, Saccharin or Stevia.
Squashes and fizzy drinks - Ribena, Lucozade, Coca Cola.	Water, soda water, diet, low calorie, sugar free squashes and fizzy drinks.
Sweets, toffee, fudge, mints, cakes, pastries, chocolate and cream filled or chocolate biscuits.	Fruit, plain biscuit, crispbreads, crackers, oat cakes, rice cakes, a small scone or a pancake.
Sugar coated or honey coated breakfast cereals - Sugar Puffs, Frosties and Crunchy Nut Cornflakes.	Unsweetened cereals eg Weetabix, Branflakes, Shredded Wheat, Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, porridge or no-added sugar museli.
Sweet pudding – crumble, tarts, tinned fruit in syrup, jelly and mousse.	Fresh or dried fruit, low fat yoghurt, sugar free jelly, no added sugar custard or tinned fruit in natural juice.

\* Occasional treat i.e. fun size chocolate bar or small bag of crisps is OK but try to avoid these foods on a daily basis.

There is no need to buy special 'diabetic' foods and drinks. These are often more expensive, can have a laxative effect, and will not help you to lose weight.

## **Aim to have 5 or more portions of fruit AND vegetables a day**

- Include some vegetables with all main meals – soups and salads can help you to increase your vegetable intake.
- Frozen and tinned vegetables are just as good as the fresh variety.
- All fruit is good for you and can be taken as a snack or as a dessert – a handful of fresh fruit, ½ tin of fruit in natural juice or 1 tablespoon dried fruit counts as a portion. It is advised to spread fruit out over the day having just one portion at a time.
- Limit fruit juice or smoothies to just one small glass (150ml) per day.

## **Cut down on fried and fatty foods**

Too much fat is linked to the development of heart disease and stroke. Cutting down on fatty foods will also help you to lose weight which can help you control your diabetes.

- Use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk.
- Choose lower-fat varieties of cheese and limit portion size.
- Instead of butter choose a reduced fat olive based spread and use sparingly.
- Limit crisps, biscuits, cream, pastries, pies, sausage rolls and 'takeaway' meals.
- Grill, poach, boil, steam, microwave or bake instead of frying.

## **Use less salt**

Too much salt in our diet is linked to high blood pressure.

- Avoid adding salt in the cooking and to food at the table.
- Use pepper, herbs, spices, lemon juice, garlic and onions to flavour your food instead.

## Alcohol

- Alcohol may be included in moderation – choose ordinary beers, spirits and wines - low-alcohol lagers, sweet wines, sherry or liqueurs are not recommended.
- A guideline for regular drinking is that it is safest not to exceed 14 units weekly for both men and women.
- For people who do drink as much as 14 units per week, the recommendation is that it is best to spread this evenly over 3 days or more.

## Activity

- Try to become more active – make regular activity part of your lifestyle, for example a daily walk.
- Aim for a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on 5 days per week - this can be broken down into shorter sessions e.g. 3 x 10 minutes.

## Sample Meal Plan

<b>Breakfast</b>	Cereal: Weetabix or Porridge or Branflakes with semi-skimmed milk  OR  Wholegrain, wholemeal or granary bread with a reduced fat olive based spread  AND  Small glass unsweetened fruit juice (150ml) or fresh fruit
<b>Lunch (snack meal)</b>	Soup with wholegrain bread or roll  OR  Roll or sandwich with suitable fillings – tuna, lean meat, thinly sliced cheese and salad  AND  Low fat yoghurt and/or fruit
<b>Dinner (main meal)</b>	Choice of pasta or boiled rice or boiled/baked potato  Serve with lean meat, poultry, eggs, fish or pulses  Include a variety of vegetables or salad  AND  Tinned fruit in natural juice or fresh fruit  OR  Low sugar desserts – low fat yoghurt, sugar free jelly or no added sugar custard
<b>Snacks</b>	Fruit, 1 x toast, plain biscuit, rice cake, oatcake or crispbread
<b>Suitable drinks</b>	Water, sugar free diluting juice, diet fizzy drinks, tea/coffee

This information booklet will give you some starter information about healthy eating and diabetes. Should you require further information your GP can refer you to a Registered Dietitian who will arrange an individual dietetic review or you may contact the department direct.

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