



# Enjoy Food

African &  
African Caribbean

Helping families with diabetes  
shop, cook and eat

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Enjoy  
food



There's no such thing as a 'diabetic diet'. A healthy, balanced diet will help you, and your family, to eat well, feel good and enjoy food.

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# A Balanced Diet



Do you  
know?

# How to balance what you eat

**You've probably heard the phrase 'a healthy, balanced diet' so many times that you'd be forgiven for thinking that healthy eating must be complicated and boring. Far from it. And, the foods you choose to eat make a difference not only to managing diabetes, but also to how well you feel and how much energy you have every day.**

How much you need to eat and drink is based on your age, gender and how active you are. For example, if you have teenagers at home you'll know they tend to have a big appetite – that's because they are growing and need more calories per day. On the other hand, an adult with a sedentary office job won't need as many calories.

No single food contains all the essential nutrients in the right amounts you need. That's why you need to consume foods from each of the main food groups.



Portion sizes have grown as plates and bowls have got bigger. Use smaller crockery to cut back on your portion sizes and make the food on your plate look bigger.

## FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

1



Fruit and veg are naturally low in fat and calories and they give you vitamins, minerals and fibre. Research suggests that a healthy, balanced diet that includes eating a variety of fruit and vegetables can help protect your family against stroke, high blood pressure, heart disease and certain cancers.

### How often?

Aim for at least five portions of fruit and veg a day. A portion is roughly the amount you can fit into the palm of your hand. Go for a rainbow of colours, from foods such as pumpkin, cho cho and papaya (pawpaw), or leafy vegetables like callaloo and spinach, to help you get as wide a range of vitamins and minerals as possible.

### Try:

- adding a handful of vegetables to rice dishes, soups and stews
- including an apple, banana, pear or orange in your child's lunchbox
- serving dishes with side salads dressed in vinegar, black pepper and mustard instead of oily or salty dressings.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Technically, sweet potatoes are considered part of the fruit and vegetable food group. However, be mindful of how much you have as the main staple of a meal, because sweet potatoes contain similar amounts of carbohydrates as other types of potatoes, which belong to the starchy food group.

## STARCHY FOODS

2



Rice, corn, cornmeal, cereals, pasta, plantain, cassava, noodles, potatoes and bread all contain carbohydrates, which are broken down into glucose and used by your cells as fuel.

Better options of starchy foods – such as wholegrain bread, wholewheat pasta and basmati, brown or wild rice – contain more fibre, which helps to keep your digestive system working well. The carbs in these foods are more slowly absorbed (that is, they have a lower glycaemic index – see page 13), and will help to keep your blood glucose levels steady throughout the day.

### How often?

Try to include some starchy foods in your diet every day.

### Try:

- cassava, boiled and flavoured with chilli and lemon
- yam, boiled or baked rather than fried – but keep an eye on your portion sizes
- reducing the size of your pounded yam, ‘eba’, ‘banku’ or ‘fufu’ balls, and bulk up your stew or soup with more pulses, such as beans
- potatoes any way you like – but don’t fry them – with the skin left on for valuable fibre
- boiling, grilling, baking or barbecuing yam or plantain – if you do decide to fry them, use kitchen roll to remove the excess oil
- injera without ghee.



## MEAT, FISH, EGGS, BEANS AND NUTS

3



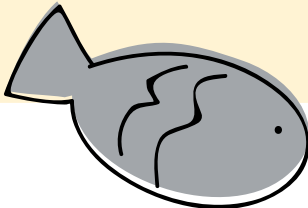
These foods are high in protein, which is needed for building and replacing muscles. They contain minerals, such as iron, which are vital for producing red blood cells. Oily fish, such as mackerel, salmon and sardines, also provide omega-3, which can help protect the heart. Beans, pulses, soya and tofu are all good sources of protein.

### How often?

Aim to have some food from this group every day, with at least 1–2 portions of oily fish a week.

### Try:

- using beans and pulses in a stew to replace some – or all – of the meat
- adding ground egusi (agushi) seeds to your stews and soups
- a small handful of unsalted nuts as a snack, or peanut butter on a slice of wholegrain bread
- eggs, scrambled, poached, dry fried or boiled – the choice is yours!
- serving lean meat, skinless poultry or a vegetarian alternative grilled, roasted or stir-fried
- grilled tilapia, as an excellent source of protein.



**Doris Ndebele, 62, was born in Zimbabwe and lives in Brighton. She was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in 2009.**

“I eat fruit and yogurt in the morning, or porridge with semi-skimmed milk. I like to use jumbo oats for my porridge in the morning. It takes me back to my childhood – my mother used to cook that.”



## DID YOU KNOW?

Evaporated milk, weight for weight, has more than twice the calories of regular whole milk. Cut your calories by choosing light or 4 per cent fat evaporated milk on occasions, and go for semi-skimmed milk (only 2 per cent fat) more often. Semi-skimmed and skimmed milk have similar amounts of calcium as regular milk.

## DAIRY FOODS

4



Dairy foods are rich in calcium, which is vital for growing children as it keeps their bones and teeth strong. They're good for adults too, and are an excellent source of protein. Choose lower-fat dairy foods like semi-skimmed milk and low-fat yogurt – this can help you lose weight and can also help you to keep an eye on your saturated fat intake. Too much saturated fat can make your blood cholesterol go up, which in turn puts you more at risk of heart problems.

Children under 2 should have whole milk because they may not get the calories or essential

vitamins they need from lower-fat milks. Don't give children skimmed milk until they're at least 5.

### How often?

Aim to have some dairy every day, but don't overdo it.

### Try:

- a bowl of cereal with skimmed or semi-skimmed milk
- a low-fat yogurt as a mid-afternoon snack, but check the label as some have sugar added
- some cheese as part of a breadfruit pie at dinner time.



People from Black African and African Caribbean communities in general are more at risk of developing certain long-term conditions, such as Type 2 diabetes, stroke and high blood pressure than people from other communities. A healthy, balanced diet can help you to reduce this risk.



## FOODS HIGH IN FAT AND SUGAR

5



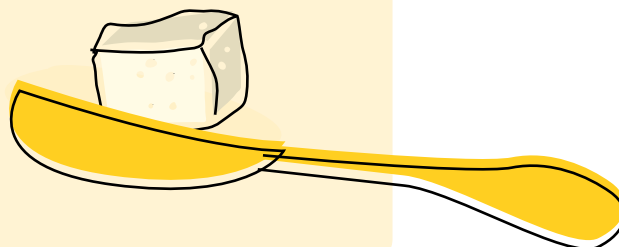
It's fine to have small amounts of these foods as part of a healthy lifestyle. Eating too much of foods like lime cake, coconut cake, meat pie, biscuits and chocolates can not only make you gain weight, but also raise your blood glucose levels if you have diabetes.

Cooking dishes in a lot of coconut cream or palm oil piles on the 'bad' (saturated) fat. These tasty ingredients are part of traditional meals, so there's no need to cut them out completely. Try measuring the amount of oil you use rather than free pouring, think twice before you add an

extra spoon of palm oil and look out for lower-fat coconut milk. Remember to opt for unsaturated oils, such as rapeseed, sunflower or olive oil more often, as they are better for your heart.

### How often?

The less often the better, especially if you are keeping an eye on your weight and/or blood glucose levels.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Condensed milk contains some calcium, but despite its name, it actually belongs to the group of foods that are high in fat and sugar, because it has too much added sugar to be considered as dairy. Keep an eye on how much you use when cooking.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Artificial sweeteners approved in the UK have undergone rigorous tests and are certified as safe. They can be a useful substitute for sugar, especially if you are watching your weight and/or blood glucose levels. Speak to your healthcare team if you have any concerns.

## ALL THE TASTE WITH LESS SALT

Eating too much salt is linked with high blood pressure, which increases your risk of heart disease and stroke. Have no more than 1 tsp (6g) of salt a day – less for children. But, with so many herbs and spices available, you really can enjoy your favourite traditional recipes with all the flavour and less salt.

- Traditional fish like codfish and other salt fish are best rinsed in water before cooking – or choose other tasty fish like sea bream, red mullet, snapper or mackerel. If you enjoy tinned fish, try sardines and pilchards. Tinned fish is better in spring water or tomato sauce, rather than brine (salt water) or oil.

- Making stew? There is so much built-in flavour in meat, fish and vegetables that you might find by gradually reducing salt you begin to taste what's naturally there already.
- Try jerk chicken made with garlic, thyme, spring onion and lemon juice – tangy flavourings help you cut down on salt.
- Ditch the seasoning mixes and create your own flavour toolbox. You could try paprika, nutmeg, mustard powder, chilli powder and black pepper.
- Forget ready-made stock cubes that are usually very high in salt. Simply boil vegetables and any meat or fish bones to make your own flavoursome broth. You can even freeze this for later use.

## DID YOU KNOW?

About two-thirds of the salt we eat is already in food. If you're buying pre-packaged or processed foods, like sandwiches, read the labels and choose lower-salt options whenever possible.

## 10 STEPS TO EATING WELL

- 1 Eat regular meals.
- 2 Include some carbohydrates.
- 3 Cut the fat, especially 'bad' (saturated) fat.
- 4 Try to eat at least five fruit and veg portions a day.
- 5 Eat plenty of beans and pulses.
- 6 Eat more fish.
- 7 Cut back on sugar.
- 8 Reduce your salt.
- 9 Keep an eye on your portion sizes.
- 10 Avoid 'diabetic foods'.





**Almaz Thomas, 20, lives in London. She was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when she was 14 years old.**

"I love Jamaican patties but it's common to serve them inside a coco bread. If I eat all that, my blood sugar goes sky high so I will just have half or do without the bread.

One of my other favourite foods is oxtail with rice and peas. Traditionally, this will be accompanied by yam, potatoes and maybe green banana – all carbohydrates! I still enjoy rice and peas but I don't have potatoes and green banana alongside it. I do love yam so may have a very small piece. If I cook rice and peas myself, I will use brown rice and no coconut cream – or maybe just a tablespoonful.

I tend to stick to fish or chicken these days and eat very little red meat, such as goat and lamb."



**Kathy Beckford, 72, lives in London. She found out she has Type 2 diabetes in 2010.**

"I cut down on sugar and starchy food, and I also changed my oil. I go walking and I have a treat once a week but otherwise I stay healthy."



Feel the  
energy

# Carbohydrates and diabetes



Aim to get most of  
your carbohydrate  
from vegetables, fruit,  
wholegrains, pulses and  
dairy products

**Carbohydrates (carbs)** are our main source of glucose for energy and provide important nutrients for good health. All the carbohydrates you eat and drink are broken down into glucose. The amount you eat can make a difference to your blood glucose levels and diabetes management.

## LET'S GET DOWN TO BASICS

Carbs can be split into two main groups:

**Starchy:** these include bread, potatoes, yams, plantain, rice and cassava.

**Sugary:** these can be divided into naturally occurring and added sugars. Naturally occurring sugars are found in whole fruits (called fructose) and milk and some dairy foods (called lactose). Added sugars are found in foods such as cakes, sweets and sugary drinks.

**Fibre** is another type of carbohydrate, which you can't digest. Insoluble fibre, such as that found in wholemeal bread, brown rice, potatoes (particularly the skin)

and wholegrain cereals, helps keep the digestive system healthy. Soluble fibre, from bananas, apples, carrots, beans, lentils, oats and barley, helps to keep your blood glucose and cholesterol under control. Make sure you eat both types of fibre regularly. Good sources of fibre include fruit and veg, nuts and seeds, oats, wholegrain breads and cereals, and pulses. They also help you feel fuller for longer, which means you're less likely to snack. Most foods have a combination of the two types of fibre. If you're eating more high-fibre foods, make sure you drink more fluids, too.

## HOW MUCH?

Everyone needs to eat carbs and it is better to have some every day. The amount that you need will depend on your age, activity levels and the goals you and your family are trying to achieve – eg trying to lose weight or improve blood glucose levels. Your dietitian can work with you to tailor an eating plan specifically for you.

## GO SLOW!

All carbs are made up of units of glucose – that means that whichever type of carb you eat, in the end it is broken down into glucose, which

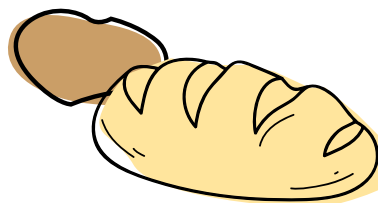
goes into your blood, making your blood glucose level go up.

The best carbs are 'slow-acting' carbohydrates, which raise your blood glucose more gradually, so they are better for diabetes. These carbs are called low-glycaemic index or low-GI foods.

GI is simply a rating of carbs between 1 and 100, depending on how slowly or quickly they raise your blood glucose. The lower the number, the slower the carb will be digested and absorbed as glucose in your bloodstream. Generally, fruits and vegetables have a low to medium GI rating. They are digested slowly and can help reduce fluctuations in your blood glucose levels. Pulses like black-eyed peas and kidney beans are nourishing low-GI foods. Plantain, yam and basmati rice are all lower-GI options too.

Not all low-GI foods are healthy choices – chocolate, for example, has a low GI because of its fat content, which slows down the absorption of carbohydrate.

Other factors that can affect the GI rating include:



## 5 WAYS TO ADD LOW-GI FOODS TO YOUR EVERYDAY MEALS

- 1 Get into the habit of adding a handful of peas or beans to your main dishes. Black-eyed and kidney beans, chickpeas and lentils are all healthy low-GI foods.
- 2 Fill up on vegetables, such as okazi, callaloo, spinach and kale.
- 3 Opt for brown rice and wholewheat pasta.
- 4 Swap white bread for wholegrain varieties, such as granary and multigrain.
- 5 Eat porridge for breakfast to make the most of low-GI oats.

**Cooking methods** – frying, boiling and baking can alter the GI level. For example, the longer pasta is cooked, the higher the GI. That's why it's best to eat it *al dente* (firm to the bite).

**Protein content** – like fat, protein slows down the absorption of carbohydrates, so milk and dairy products will have a low GI.

**The ripeness of fruit and vegetables** – in general, the riper the fruit and some vegetables, the higher the GI.

**Fibre** – this acts as a physical barrier that slows down the absorption of carbohydrate, so the more fibre in a food, the slower carbs are absorbed.

Eating to control your diabetes isn't just about GI ratings. Think of the bigger picture and choose foods low in saturated fat, salt and sugar as part of a healthy, balanced diet.



For tasty meal ideas go to [www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes)

## INSULIN AND CARB COUNTING

If you have diabetes and take insulin, you'll need to take that into account when eating carbs. Learn about which foods contain carbs, how to estimate carb portions and how to monitor their effect on blood glucose levels.

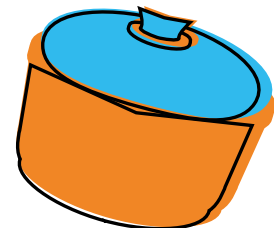
There are special courses available, such as:

- DAFNE, for people with Type 1 diabetes – teaches you how to match your insulin dose with your carb intake
- X-PERT and DESMOND, for people with Type 2 diabetes – teaches carb awareness as part of the programme.

Your diabetes healthcare team can tell you about the courses available in your area.



A good starting point is to get the free Diabetes UK e-book *Carbs Count: an introduction to carbohydrate counting and insulin dose adjustment* – download it from [shop.diabetes.org.uk/go/carbs-count](http://shop.diabetes.org.uk/go/carbs-count)



## COELIAC DISEASE

This is an autoimmune disease that is more common in people with Type 1 diabetes, where the body reacts to gluten (a protein found in wheat, barley and rye), which damages the gut lining and makes it difficult to absorb food. Symptoms include bloating, stomach ache, diarrhoea, constipation, anaemia, poor growth and unexplained hypos.

Everyone with Type 1 diabetes should be assessed for coeliac disease. If you show symptoms you should be given a blood test, and if it's positive diagnosis is confirmed by a gut biopsy. Don't start a gluten-free diet until you have a definite diagnosis, as this may give an inaccurate result.

Once diagnosed, the only treatment is to cut out gluten from your diet permanently. If you have coeliac disease, a specialist dietitian can help you with both diabetes and coeliac disease. For more information about coeliac disease, go to [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk)



In the know

# Understanding food labels

**If you buy pre-packed foods and drinks, understanding the information on the labels can help you make healthier choices. Here's what you need to know.**

Labels on foods and drinks give essential information, such as the ingredients the product contains – as well as the nutrients (such as fats, calories and fibre), and how much they contribute to the maximum of each that's required every day.

## ON THE BACK

Information on the back of a pack is compulsory and gives details about the ingredients, nutritional composition, known allergens, 'best before' or 'use-by' dates and the weight of the product. The ingredients are listed in order, starting with the highest-quantity ingredient first, down to the lowest-quantity ingredient last. So, if you find sugar at the top of the list, the food is likely to be high in sugar.

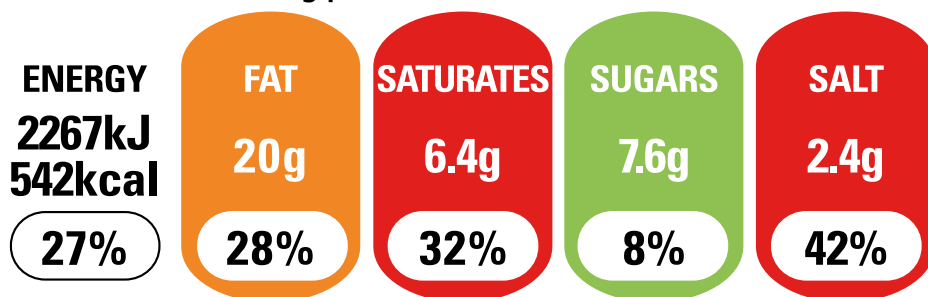
## ON THE FRONT

'Front of pack' labelling, while still voluntary, has been around for a while now and is an easy way to check, at a glance, how healthy a food is. The labels show how many calories are in the food or drink and are also colour coded to show whether the food is low (green), medium (amber) or high (red) in fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt (see example of a new label, (left), and table, (page 16)). The information on the front of the pack also tells you how the portion of the food contributes to the reference intake (RI) of an adult.

Try to choose foods with more greens and ambers and fewer reds. And, if the traffic lights aren't available, check the 'per 100g' column on the 'back of pack' nutritional label.

Example of a new label

Each 254g pack contains:



of your reference intake

Typical values per 100g: Energy 756kJ/213kcal

**PORTION SIZE**

A manufacturer’s definition of a portion or serving size may be different from yours. In general, the portion sizes given are suitable for adults over the age of 18. Younger children and teenagers may need different amounts. Even with healthier choices, if you eat large portions you may end up consuming more calories, fats and sugars than you need.

How much you eat of any food influences your nutrient and calorie intake, so think about the portion size when you’re buying food. Don’t always eat the amount the manufacturer recommends if you think you need less.

**NUTRITIONAL CLAIMS**

Many of the claims made on food packaging, such as fat free or low fat, can be confusing. Here’s the difference:

**Fat free:** has to have no fat, but check for added sugars, which are often used to replace the fat.

**Sugar free:** check the ingredients list for fat, which may replace the sugar.

**Low fat:** the product has 3g or less fat per 100g.

**Low sugar:** the product has 5g or less sugar per 100g.

**No added sugar:** although no sugar is added, there may be naturally occurring sugars in the food.

**Reduced fat or sugar:**

contains at least 30 per cent less fat or sugar than the standard version of the product. This doesn’t necessarily mean it’s healthy and in some cases the ‘lite version of, say, crisps, can contain the same amount of calories and fat as the standard version of another brand.

**AND IF THERE IS NO NUTRITIONAL INFO?**

Not everything you buy will have nutrition information, but the rest of the pack may give you clues to help you make healthier choices. It is important to check the ingredients list, or ask about what ingredients make up the food.

**How to work out if a food is low, medium or high in fats, sugars and salt**

All measures per 100g	Low	Medium	High
.....			
Fat	3g or less	>3g – ≤17.5g	More than 17.5g or >21g/portion
Saturated fat	1.5g or less	>1.5g – ≤5g	More than 5g or >6g/portion
Sugars	5g or less	>5g – ≤22.5g	More than 22.5g or >27g/portion
Salt	0.3g or less	>0.3g – ≤1.5g	More than 1.5g or >1.8g/portion

Note: portion size criteria apply to portions/serving sizes greater than 100g.

## 6 WAYS TO BE LABEL SAVVY

**Follow these tips to become expert at deciphering labels:**

- 1 With traffic light labels, go for green, sometimes amber, and red only as a treat.
- 2 Reference intake (RI) percentages are given per portion, and indicate how much the portion contributes to the maximum amount of calories, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt adults should have. Check how much of the pack counts as a portion to avoid eating more calories, fat and sugar than you need.
- 3 All carbohydrates raise blood glucose levels. Labels on the front don't include the amount of carbs, so check the label on the back of the pack for the total carbohydrate, which includes carbohydrates from starchy food as well as sugars.
- 4 The figures for sugars on traffic lights are for total sugars, which doesn't tell you how much of the sugar comes from natural sources, such as fructose, and how much is added, such as sucrose or glucose. Check the ingredients list – if syrup, invert syrup, cane sugar, molasses or anything ending in 'ose' is within the first three ingredients, this suggests the food contains more added sugar. Choose an alternative if possible, or be mindful of the portion you eat.
- 5 Check the fibre content on the back of pack label. If you're choosing between two similar products and one has more fibre, choose that, as we should all be consuming more fibre as part of our diet.
- 6 Check the manufacturer's definition of a portion size. It may differ from yours and be quite a lot smaller than what you would like to eat! However, if you are trying to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight, it's a good idea to reduce your portion sizes.

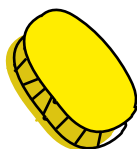


It's important to check the ingredients list or back of pack label so you can compare two products like for like per 100g.

Find out more about food labelling by visiting our Enjoy Food pages at [www.diabetes.org.uk/enjoyfood](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/enjoyfood)



# How to eat well on a budget



**When money's tight, it can seem hard to think of ways to trim your food bill and still provide healthy meals for the family. But it is possible – here's how.**

## MAKE A PLAN

Write a menu plan for the week ahead, including breakfast, lunch and dinner. If seven days is too long, you can do one for Monday to Friday and be flexible at weekends. Get the whole family involved, making sure their favourite (healthy) meals are included.

Shop for more fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and pulses. Then, add other protein – such as chicken and fish – and dairy. Beans and pulses are also excellent for making meals go further. Add them to lean mince for bolognese, or to chicken for curry. Don't forget your spices.

Write down the meals for the week on a meal planner and stick it to your fridge, or somewhere else where the whole family can see it, to remind you what you're eating that week.

## MAKE A LIST

The shopping list is your most important tool when sticking to a budget. If you know what you need before you head to the shops, you're less likely to pick up extra food, so you'll keep costs low. It's not a good idea to go shopping while you're hungry, because you may be more likely to make

unhealthy food choices at the shop as a result.

Use your menu plan to work out what you need for the week, then check what you have already in the store cupboard (see page 21), in the fridge that needs using up and in the freezer. Check use-by and best-before dates. Use-by means the food must be eaten by that date for food safety, but best-before dates simply mean the food may not be quite as flavourful after that date. This applies to many canned foods and dried ones, such as pasta, so use them up before you buy more.

## The shopping trip

If you prefer to do a weekly supermarket shop, the golden rule is never do it when you're hungry as you'll end up with high-fat, high-sugar foods in the trolley. Stick to your list and you'll stick to your budget.

✓ Seasonal fruit and vegetables are usually cheaper.

✓ Frozen fruit and vegetables are often cheaper than fresh ones – and just as good. Canned varieties are good too – look for veg in water with no added salt, or fruit in juice rather than syrup.

✓ Choose own-brand versions of staples such as cereals and pasta.

✓ Try cheaper cuts of meat, such as shin of beef for stews instead of stewing steak, and pollock or flounder instead of cod or haddock.

✓ Keep cartons of fruit juice to a minimum, because they don't contain enough fibre.

✓ Keep an eye on BOGOFs (buy one get one free), as you might end up buying more than you need.

✓ It can be cheaper to buy some foods, such as chicken fillets, fruit, vegetables or cheese, whole, rather than chopped or prepared.





## MAKE IT GO FURTHER

Dedicating an hour or two in the kitchen at the weekend can pay dividends during the week. For example, cook up a batch of lean mince (or Quorn), making it go even further by adding beans or pulses, then create a shepherd's pie for Sunday dinner and freeze the rest in two portions for lasagne and chilli con carne later in the week.

Cooking more than you need for one meal is also a great way to use leftovers for lunch the following day. When you reheat food, make sure it's hot through before you eat it – and only ever reheat food once. For more on food safety, go to [www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/homehygiene](http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/homehygiene)



## Try these other smart tips:

- ✓ Use leftover roast chicken to make a risotto for the next day and use the bones to make stock for chicken broth.
- ✓ Blitz over-ripe tomatoes in a blender and use in place of canned tomatoes in pasta sauce or on top of pizza bases.
- ✓ Make your own smoothie, keeping an eye on portion sizes, or a fruit compote from over-ripe fruit – great topped with yogurt for kids.
- ✓ For a Friday night use-up meal, take whatever's in the fridge and use in a pasta bake.

## FIVE A DAY – GETTING THE FAMILY ON BOARD

Perhaps you have someone in your family who's not keen on fruit or vegetables. Here's how to get them to up their intake:

- ✓ Add sliced bananas or sultanas to breakfast cereal or porridge.
- ✓ Add raisins or dried fruit to school lunchboxes.
- ✓ Provide two different coloured vegetables for supper, such as broccoli and carrots or courgettes and squash.
- ✓ Add canned sweetcorn or peas (in water with no added sugar) to a frittata or omelette.

## USE IT, DON'T WASTE IT

We throw away millions of tonnes of food a year, some of which has never been opened. That's £700 for an average family with children – or six meals a week.

According to the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), which compiled the figures, top of the waste list are potatoes, bread, fruit and vegetables.





Keep your cupboard well stocked with some core ingredients and you'll be able to whip up a meal in no time.

Cooking oil (choose sunflower, olive or rapeseed oil, and get an oil sprayer, as you'll use less).

■ Canned beans (baked, butter, cannellini and kidney beans).

Chilli powder.

Onions.

Garlic.

Potatoes.

Stock cubes (choose reduced-salt varieties).

Cook &  
relax!

# Family cooking



**Traditional dishes are part of culture and can be an expression of love and care for friends and family, although cooking methods and meal patterns vary between families. Whether you cook traditional meals only at weekends, or you do so more frequently in the evenings too, eating home-cooked meals is a good thing. The whole family can play their part and, when the meal is ready, you can all relax and enjoy it.**

Cooking together as a family helps to promote healthy eating, because if one of you is trying to maintain or lose weight, it's often much easier to do so with the whole family on board to spur you on.

Everyone can get involved in preparing and cooking meals – it helps give children the skills to cook for themselves when they're older and gives them an idea of where different foods come from. Some jobs need supervision, eg when using knives, cooking on the hob or using the oven.

But even younger children can join in cooking by spreading tomato sauce on pizza bases and stirring pre-chopped cucumber into yogurt as a dip.

## TRY THESE OTHER IDEAS

**Get involved:** weighing and measuring, mixing ingredients for marinades, baking and decorating cakes and scones – there's lots kids can do in the kitchen from an early age. Not only will they learn what goes into the food they're eating, but they'll also learn cookery skills that will last a lifetime.

**Grow your own:** even a window box will do. Plant herbs, salad leaves and tomatoes in a grow bag. Let the kids gather what's needed for that day's meal.



**Up that veg count:** Steam fresh or frozen vegetables in a minimal amount of boiling water with a tight-fitting lid. You preserve more nutrients if you cook them quickly and serve immediately. Add fresh lime juice, herbs or spices like paprika to liven up vegetable dishes and help you cut down on added salt.

**Cooking carbs:** Boil dasheen, add black pepper and spring onions, and then mash with semi-skimmed milk for a tasty accompaniment to fish.

If you have to fry yam, plantain, breadfruit or dasheen, cut it into thick pieces and shallow fry, so it absorbs less fat.

Grate or dice boiled breadfruit and add peppers, carrots, peas, chilli peppers, red onion, black pepper and vinegar to transform it into a crunchy and filling salad.

Rice with peas needn't be made with coconut milk if you want to watch your weight. Use the liquid from a can of kidney beans instead. Try doubling the beans – you'll get more protein and fibre per serving!

Boiled or baked, breadfruit, cassava, plantain, yam and other starchy foods can be flavoured with chopped onions, sweet peppers, herbs and spices.

**New ways with meat and fish:** Steam sea bream or red snapper with okra and cabbage. Flavour with chopped spring onion, chillies and lime.

Making meat stew? Rather than frying the meat or chicken first, take a short cut and add everything into the pot at once. No need to add extra fat, as there's already some in the meat and this will bring moisture to the dish. Add onions, sweet peppers and spices as usual – they'll help you keep added salt to a minimum. Serve with steamed rice and a colourful salad.

Fish and okra in soup are a great combination. Rinse then boil salted fish in plenty of water, then throw the water away so that you remove as much salt as possible.

**Lynette Richards-Lorde, 75,  
lives in Croydon with her  
husband, who has  
Type 2 diabetes.**

“I have cut down on the amount of fat I use to cook. I roast or grill foods, rather than frying. I don't use coconut cream in my rice and peas anymore and my husband does not miss it. Overall, we just vary our menu as much as possible.”



## BRING IT DOWN...

**Part of eating healthily is cutting back on sugar, fat and salt – try these tips:**

### Sugar

- ✓ Use dried fruit to replace some of the sugar when baking.
- ✓ Make your own sweet treats, experimenting with using less sugar.
- ✓ Try using artificial sweeteners instead of sugar, to add extra sweetness to your dishes.
- ✓ Get to know food labels and learn other names for sugar. If you see the terms glucose, fructose, syrup, dextrose, molasses, maltose, maltodextrin, invert sugar or honey on a food label, you'll know there's sugar in it.

### Fat

- ✓ Choose lean meat, poultry and fish. Remove any visible fat and discard the skin from poultry before cooking.
- ✓ How about mixing coconut milk with semi-skimmed milk? You get colour and a creamy texture but you've slashed the calories.

- ✓ There is no great substitute for palm oil, but try using less and adding tomato purée to give that bright red colour. Look for products that contain half palm oil and half vegetable oil as an alternative. Anything that helps you to use less is a step in the right direction.
- ✓ Use measured amounts of unsaturated fats, such as olive, sunflower and rapeseed oil, in cooking, as these are better for your heart than palm oil or butter.
- ✓ Use an oil sprayer and non-stick pans for stir-fries; if it starts to stick, just add a splash of water.

### Salt

- ✓ Reduce your intake of processed foods. Read labels and choose lower-salt alternatives whenever possible.
- ✓ Measure added salt in cooking with a teaspoon and use less as time goes on. Do it gradually and the family will hardly notice! Use ginger, garlic, chillies, black pepper and other spices to flavour your food instead.

### Healthier ways to have

**dairy:** If you're adding cheese to traditional meals, try using grated extra mature cheddar. The stronger flavour will help you to use less, and people don't tend to use as much cheese when they grate it. Whiz up a tasty and refreshing

pineapple cooler: mix semi-skimmed milk, a little pineapple juice and coconut water together. Flavour with sprigs of mint and throw in some crushed ice.

Mix chopped pineapple and mango with low-fat natural yoghurt for a tropical treat.



Go to **[www.diabetes.org.uk/enjoyfood](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/enjoyfood)** to read about how others have made positive changes thanks to the Enjoy Food programme.



## TIME TO EAT!

It can be hard to get everyone together every day, so make it a rule that, at least once a week, the whole family gathers to enjoy what they've cooked. Turn off the TV, tablets and mobiles and use this time to catch up on each other's news.

There's usually no need to cook different meals for different members of the family – but remember that portion sizes differ according to ages and whether any adults are trying to lose weight. So, dish up more protein for active teenagers and make sure there are at least two vegetables on offer. And use smaller plates – what looks small on a 12-inch plate looks fine on an 8-inch one.

For main meals, dish out the vegetables first and let them fill up your plate. Separate the different foods on the plate rather than piling them on top of each other. Resist the temptation to go for a second helping; have a glass of water first.



**Sonia Winifred, 60, lives in London.  
She's mum to Almaz, who has Type 1 diabetes.**

"Even though our family meals were healthy, when my daughter was diagnosed, I did question myself about what I had done wrong. I soon realised that our diet was healthy and, instead, I looked at how I was cooking food and the portion sizes. I always used olive oil anyway but I cut back on frying foods and now steam or grill fish."



Have  
fun

# Eating out with diabetes



Meals and snacks out  
can often be higher in salt, fat  
and sugar than those you make  
at home, and the portion sizes  
may be bigger, too

**Eating out, going on holiday and having celebrations are all parts of everyday life and should be enjoyed whether you have diabetes or not. The key is to put some thought into what you do beforehand, and to be conscious of your choices and portion sizes, while still enjoying what you eat.**

In a restaurant, remember you are the customer, so it's generally acceptable to make reasonable requests about food. Some places even give you calorie values and other nutritional information next to different menu items, which really helps you to be aware of what you're eating so you can make healthier choices. If you do go for a high-calorie item, at least you're doing it with full awareness and you can think about how that fits in with your overall nutritional goals.

It is OK to have the occasional treat but it's important not to do this regularly, especially if you are trying to manage your weight.

## PLANNING YOUR DINING EXPERIENCE

Choose a restaurant that offers plenty of choice, with lots of vegetables. You can learn a lot by looking up menus on a restaurant's website and maybe you could create a shortlist of choices before you go.

Ring in advance will help you assess how flexible they are with requests like serving lightly steamed vegetables instead of veg smothered in butter, or new potatoes in their skins rather than fried potatoes. Of course, if this is a treat and you fancy fried potatoes, then keep an eye on your portion size. Being conscious of your choice is the key.

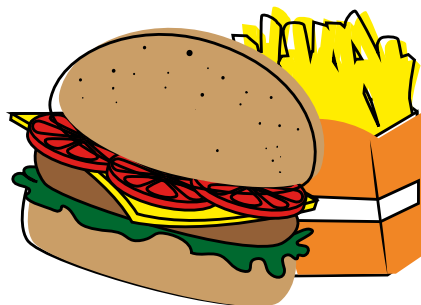
If you can, plan a brisk walk before or after the meal – it will help keep your blood glucose stable and help you manage your weight.

## AT THE RESTAURANT

Be strategic and position yourself on a chair that isn't facing the kitchen so you're less tempted as waiters emerge with colourful desserts and huge plates of food. Consider asking for water as you're handed the menu. Thirst can often be confused with hunger, so having a drink may help to curb your appetite a little.



Choose from the à la carte menu so you can pick and mix higher- and lower-calorie dishes, helping you stay in control. Remember your background research and choose items that you've earmarked as being healthy, tasty choices. If you're uncomfortable asking about special requests, you could always slip away and speak to a waiter away from your table.



## STARTING OFF...

A good trick is to place your own order first, so you're less likely to be influenced by what everyone else is having. If it's practical, suggest that everyone orders the appetisers first and the entrée later. Once you've munched through your starter, you are likely to feel less hungry, which can help you make a lighter main meal choice.

Think about which items on the sharing platter are better choices – barbecued or grilled chicken, chickpeas with flatbread, olives, dried mango, roasted sweet peppers, crunchy vegetable salads, and baked dough balls are often lower-calorie choices compared with fried jerk chicken strips, fried plantain, and cheese or coconut-based dishes. Jamaican patties may be fried, so check how it's been cooked, request a smaller portion and ask for a large portion of salad on the side. Alternatively, opt for non-creamy soup. This can help to fill you up and you can pace yourself by taking smaller spoonfuls, helping you to slow down the speed at which you eat. Eating more slowly helps you to be more in tune with your appetite.



## THE MAIN EVENT

Scan the menu for steamed or boiled dishes like steamed rice, noodles with vegetables, grilled meat and fish dishes. Jerk chicken cooked on a grill is likely to be lower in fat than fried chicken. Fancy pumpkin stew with flatbread? Whole grilled tilapia with boiled plantain or yam? These can be excellent choices – but remember to keep an eye on your portion size.

Get into the habit of ordering extra side salads and ask for the dressing to be served separately. Most places are happy to give you some fresh lemon and cracked black pepper to drizzle on your salad. Feel free to ask what's in salads – they may have added breaded chicken, full-fat cheese, fried bread croutons and rich creamy dressings. Buffet-style salad bars can help you make healthier choices, so long as you're aware of creamy dressings and salads coated in mayonnaise.

When you've made your choice, it's helpful to put the menu down so you are less likely to be tempted into ordering anything else.

## SWEET ENDINGS

If you choose a dessert, keep an eye on your portion size. It's fine to enjoy a sweet treat, but it can be easy to eat too much. Try a scoop of ice cream, some fresh fruit salad, a sorbet, or perhaps share some carrot cake or plantain pudding with a friend or family member. Use a teaspoon rather than a dessert spoon and pace yourself – smaller mouthfuls mean fewer calories.

## THE TAKEAWAY

There's no reason why people with diabetes can't enjoy fast food like burgers and fries now and then, but limit how often you get a takeaway. Many outlets serve carrot sticks, salads, potato wedges, fresh fruit and small cartons of fruit juice and diet drinks as well as sugar-rich drinks and crispy fries. You can order burgers without the high-fat cheese or mayo and ask for extra lettuce. Going for a pizza? Try a thin base with less cheese and go for lots of fruit and vegetable toppings.



## PARTY TIME FOR CHILDREN WITH DIABETES

It's hard to imagine a children's birthday party without cake and sweets. It seems to be just as normal as presents and balloons. A child with diabetes can still enjoy birthday parties, dinner at a friend's house and school trips – you'll just need to do a little forward planning. If your child is visiting a friend's house, it's good to let the parents know what support your child may need in managing their diabetes. No doubt they would rather be prepared than panic if your child has a hypo or can't eat any of the food on offer. The same goes for informing the school if they're going on a trip.

Remember, your child is likely to be more active at a party or on a school excursion, so they may need extra carbohydrate to prevent hypos. Encourage them to fill up on starchy foods like sandwiches, oven baked chips or potato wedges, rice and fruit, and help them to adjust their insulin dose accordingly.







## INSULIN AND EATING OUT

An occasional change in usual routine and diet when eating out needn't have a huge effect on long-term diabetes control. If you treat your diabetes with insulin, short-term effects on blood glucose can be balanced by adjusting the timing and/or the amount of insulin you take.

If you're confident with counting carbs, either for yourself or your child, and adjusting the dose, it may be possible to change the amount you inject to fit with the food you or your child eat. To make it easier to estimate the amount of carbohydrate you or your child eat, try the **Carbs & Cals** book (go to [shop.diabetes.org.uk](http://shop.diabetes.org.uk)).



**Sonia Winifred's daughter, Almaz, has Type 1 diabetes. They both live in London.**

"My advice to other parents whose child is diagnosed with diabetes is: don't panic! Don't throw out all the food in your fridge or spend a lot of money on health foods. Learning about portion control, counting carbs and reducing the amount of oil and fat you use in cooking are all important so that the whole family can continue to enjoy healthy food. Get in touch with other parents in the same position, take control and know that you are not alone."

**Benny Bonsu, 33, lives in Ghana and London. She was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in 2012.**

"My diet isn't always perfect, but I live healthily by changing what I eat when I need to and exercising to stay on track."

**Almaz Thomas, 20, lives in London. She has Type 1 diabetes.**

"Sometimes people question me or try to stop me if I order a dessert, but I have my diabetes under control and know that I can still enjoy cakes and desserts in moderation because I eat a healthy, balanced diet."

# Alcohol and other drinks

**Water forms a substantial part of the human body, so it makes sense to drink enough fluid every day to stay hydrated and healthy. Water, tea, coffee, milk, fruit juices and smoothies all count – and you get fluid from the food you eat, especially from fruit and veg.**

## THIRSTY?

Does it matter what we drink? Yes, particularly when it comes to fruit juices, smoothies and sugary or alcoholic drinks – you can be having more calories and sugar than you intend to because it's easy to drink a large amount within a short time. It is important not to drink your calories when trying to manage your weight.

Choose **water**, which is calorie and sugar-free, rather than sugary drinks. Don't assume that flavoured water has no sugar in it. You could be getting between 5 and 7 tsps of sugar in a bottle, so always read the label (see pages 15–17).

However, there are times when water just doesn't do the trick. So, how do you know what to choose?

**Tea, coffee and hot chocolate** – cut back on sugar and use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk.

**No added sugar squash and cordials** are a good option as you tend to use little and add more water. They do not affect your blood glucose in the way fruit juices and sugary drinks do.

**Fruit juices** (100% juice) contain vitamins and minerals and 150ml provides one portion of your five a day – but remember, fruit juices only count as one portion, however much you drink, so limit your intake to a maximum of one small glass a day.

**Sugary drinks** like cola, ginger beer, kola champagne, glucose drinks, cordials and energy drinks give you a hit of sugar and not much else – it's best to avoid them unless treating hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose or a hypo). Cordials and syrups like sarsaparilla are not available in sugar-free varieties, so serve them well diluted to limit your sugar intake. Try low-calorie, diet or light versions of ginger beer. If you use **tinned evaporated**

or **condensed milk** in drinks, remember that they can be high in fat and sugar. And if you add sugar or honey, you're making them even healthier. Try semi-skimmed milk, cut down on added sugar or use an artificial sweetener.

**Malted drinks** and **energy drinks** can be high in sugar and calories. You can get energy and nutrients by eating a variety of foods, so you don't need any special drinks to stay healthy.

## IF YOU DRINK ALCOHOL...

Current government guidelines recommend no more than 3–4 units of alcohol a day for men, and 2–3 units a day for women. It's better to drink less and to have at least two alcohol-free days a week.

Alcohol contains calories so try and reduce your intake if you are trying to lose weight. Alternate alcoholic with non-alcoholic drinks.

Alcohol makes you more prone to a hypo if you treat your diabetes with insulin or certain medications such as sulphonylureas. Pace yourself and keep track of how much you're drinking. If you've had

## WHAT'S IN A UNIT?

The size of the glass and the type of alcohol affects the number of units. You can check units at [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)



**1**

**PUB MEASURE**  
(25ml) spirit,  
eg vodka,  
gin, whisky  
(40% ABV approx)



**1.5**

**BOTTLE**  
(275ml)  
alcopop  
(5.5% ABV)



**1.5**

**SMALL GLASS**  
(125ml)  
white, rosé  
or red wine  
(12% ABV)



**1.7**

**BOTTLE**  
(330ml)  
lager, beer  
or cider  
(5% ABV)



**2**

**CAN**  
(440ml)  
lager, beer  
or cider  
(5% ABV)



**2**

**1 PINT**  
Lower-  
strength  
lager, beer  
or cider  
(3.6% ABV)



**2.1**

**MEDIUM GLASS**  
(175ml)  
white, rosé  
or red wine  
(12% ABV)



**3**

**LARGE GLASS**  
(250ml)  
white, rosé  
or red wine  
(12% ABV)

too much, you might not detect a hypo and people around you could think alcohol is responsible for your change in behaviour.



As a rule, it's best for you and your family to choose water, unsweetened milky drinks, no added sugar cordials, diluted fruit juice or sugar-free, no added sugar or diet drinks.

## TOP TIPS FOR SAFER DRINKING TO PREVENT A HYPO

- Tell people about your diabetes and how they can help if you have a hypo. Carry some identification with you, too.
- Take a hypo treatment with you.
- Have something to eat before you go out. Always have something starchy, such as cereal or toast, before going to

bed after you've had more than a few units of alcohol, to help reduce your risk of a night-time hypo. Drink a pint of water, too, so that you stay hydrated.

- Check your blood glucose level before you go to bed and in the morning. If it's low, don't ignore it; if you can't face food, have a sugary drink.

A time  
to purify

# Religious Fasting

**Fasting is an important part of many religions. As well as abstinence from food (and sometimes drink), fasting is also a time of reflection, prayer and purification.**

People with diabetes are usually exempt from fasting, although many still choose to do it. Your religious leader can tell you more. If you decide you want to fast, plan ahead and speak to your diabetes healthcare team to make sure your diabetes control is not affected.

When you break the fast, stick to your usual balanced meals, including starchy foods (such as rice and bread) and fruit and veg. Only have small amounts of sugary and fatty foods, such as sweets, cakes and fried snacks.

## TOP TIPS

- 1 Speak to your diabetes healthcare team about adjusting your medications including insulin, testing and avoiding highs and lows.
- 2 Check your blood glucose levels more often throughout. Doing so does not mean you are breaking the fast.
- 3 If you experience symptoms of a hypo, break the fast immediately and treat it with your usual hypo treatment.
- 4 At the end of fasting, drink plenty of water or sugar-free drinks to avoid dehydration. If you like sweet drinks, consider using sweetener instead of sugar.



## INFORMATION

For more information on fasting with diabetes, call Diabetes UK Careline on 0345 123 2399\*, or go to [www.diabetes.org.uk/fasting](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/fasting)



# Herbal and Food supplements

**Many people rely on traditional herbal and complementary remedies, which are said to help with blood glucose control. These remedies can be homemade or bought from local shops, and while they may have benefits, they should not be a substitute for your medications.**

The **aloe vera** plant is used in various different formulations to treat many conditions – the juice is said to be helpful for diabetes management.

**Bitter lemon, bitter gourd** and **karela** (or carilla) are popular among several cultures and have long been used as a remedy for Type 2 diabetes and other conditions.

**Camel's milk** is highly regarded in Somali and Bedouin communities for its positive effects on autoimmune conditions.

Many herbal and complementary therapies sold in shops have not been tested and they are not regulated in the same way as prescribed medications.

If you are taking any herbal or complementary remedies,

it's important that you speak to your healthcare team and continue to take your diabetes medication. There may be risks associated with taking supplements, because they affect the way your diabetes medications work, and make diabetes complications (eg kidney disease) worse.

## STAYING SAFE

Currently there is no known cure for diabetes, so any claims that herbal remedies can cure the condition are not supported.

Remember that phrases such as 'natural', 'herbal' and 'derived from plant' do not necessarily mean 'safe'.

As with all medicine, keep herbal remedies out of sight and reach of children.



Diabetes UK does not recommend the use of herbal remedies and supplements as there is not enough evidence that they are safe and effective for people with diabetes to use.



## SUPPLEMENTS

Vitamin and mineral supplements are becoming increasingly popular, but they have no clear benefits for people with diabetes, unless you have a deficiency or your doctor prescribes them. An exception is pregnant women and those planning to have a baby.

Most people should aim to get all their nutrients from a varied and balanced diet. If you are concerned that you may be at risk of lacking a particular nutrient, discuss this with your diabetes healthcare team.

# what's your healthy weight?



**We know that many adults in the UK are overweight or obese and those extra pounds can cause problems with our health, whether we have diabetes or not. Excess weight is linked with heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke and some cancers – as well as Type 2 diabetes. Keeping to a healthy weight is the best way of reducing your risk of developing many long-term health problems.**

Achieving a healthy weight, and maintaining it, is often easier said than done: it's one of the hardest things to do for some people. Whether you want to lose or gain a few pounds – or are a healthy weight already – there's lots of evidence to show that maintaining a healthy weight will benefit your health. These benefits include better blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose levels and reducing your risk of developing many long-term health problems. And most people say they also feel better about how they look.

## WHAT IS A HEALTHY WEIGHT?

Your first step to learning if you are a healthy weight is to check what your body mass index (BMI) and your waist size are. For most adults, these are good clues to whether they are a healthy weight.

BMI measures the amount of weight relative to your height and will give you an indication of whether you are underweight, a healthy weight or overweight.

## BMI

To find out more about BMI, including how to work out if your BMI is healthy, go to [www.nhs.uk/tools/pages/healthyweightcalculator.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/tools/pages/healthyweightcalculator.aspx)

## WHAT'S YOUR WAIST MEASUREMENT?

Measuring your waist can help you find out how much fat you have stored around your stomach. If your hips are bigger than your waist, this is considered to be a healthier body shape, but your overall body weight also matters. People who store more fat around their stomach are more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. If you have diabetes and need to lose weight, reducing your waist size will help to improve blood glucose control.

**Measure yours now** around your middle, midway between the bottom of your ribcage and the top of your hips (see picture, right). It should be less than:

- 80cm (31.5in) for Black women
- 94cm (37in) for Black men.

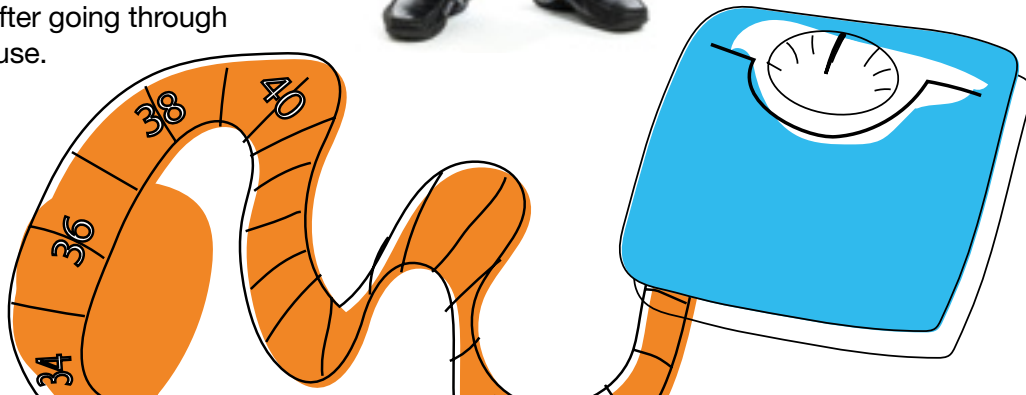


Your waist measurement will vary throughout your life and women in particular are more likely to put on weight around the middle after going through the menopause.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STAY A HEALTHY WEIGHT

- Speak to a dietitian about what a healthy weight is for you. The important thing is to set weight-loss goals that are realistic.
- Adopting a whole-family approach by cooking healthier meals for everyone, and doing activities in which everyone can be involved, will help everyone reach and maintain a healthy weight
- Go to [www.diabetes.org.uk/enjoyfood](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/enjoyfood) for more on cooking and eating with diabetes and [www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes) for ideas on what to cook.



## WATCHING YOUR WEIGHT

If your goal is to lose weight, the best way to do it is to eat less and move more, and there are different ways to approach this. Set realistic, achievable targets that fit in with your culture and lifestyle. It can be hard going it alone, but your family can support you as you work towards your goals. Adjusting cooking methods and choosing healthier ingredients is good for the whole family, whether you have diabetes or not.

## 5 TRICKS AND TOOLS

- 1 Brighten up your meals with colourful salads and vegetables. Fill up your plate with loads of fruits and vegetables before you add your starchy carbs and protein foods. Some people find it helpful to use smaller plates. Try not to serve different foods on top of each other. Separate them so that you are aware of how much you're eating.
- 2 Make a five-a-day chart for each member of the family, using coloured stickers for each portion. Total it up at the end of the week to see who's won.

- 3 Cooking together is another way to help the family make healthier choices. Involve children in shopping and cooking so they know what's in their food. A lot of grocery stores have a colourful range of traditional fruits and vegetables displayed outside. You could ask the children to pick firm tomatoes, shiny aubergines and pineapple that's not dried out.
- 4 Read labels together so that you get used to comparing different foods, helping you to make healthier choices.
- 5 And remember, family fun can also be active fun. Taking part in team sports, going on family walks, dance classes and swimming are great ways to build relationships within the family and encourage active lifestyles from a young age. Make this a part of family life so you're all getting regular exercise – and you'll be cutting down on the amount of time spent doing seated activities, such as watching TV or playing computer games.

## HEALTHY HABITS START IN CHILDHOOD

If you're a parent, you're probably often not satisfied until your children have had a proper home-cooked meal and finished what's on their plate. Traditional meals can be very healthy if cooked appropriately, but doubling up on meals isn't a good idea if they've already had a substantial snack after school. Children may enjoy a takeaway on the way home from school, but regardless of whether that food was cooked at home, it still has calories. Also, fast foods tend to be lower in essential nutrients and they can be highly processed. Think about encouraging your children to eat fresh foods and perhaps prepare healthier favourite snacks whenever possible for them to enjoy after school, so that they're not having the equivalent of two evening meals.







CHANNEL  
SWIM  
POOL  
CHALLENGE



## CAN YOU SWIM22?

Over three months, swim the equivalent of the English Channel in your local pool for Diabetes UK.

It's a great way to help you get fit and healthy, whilst raising money to help us find a cure for diabetes.

**To sign up for Swim22:**

**Go to** [www.diabetes.org.uk/swim22](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/swim22)

**Email** [swim22@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:swim22@diabetes.org.uk)

**DiABETES UK**  
CARE. CONNECT. CAMPAIGN.

# Family Food





Have fun  
together

# cooking at home

**Cooking and eating together as a family not only helps you eat a healthy, balanced diet, but also helps you maintain cookery skills that last a lifetime – and have fun with food!**

Whatever you make, cooking is a fun activity for families to do together. It doesn't have to be difficult, and an extra pair of small hands to do some mixing can get dinner on the table in no time. Plus, if children have helped prepare food, they're more likely to try it for themselves.

You can always make what you cook and eat that little bit healthier, without losing out on flavour – try the following healthy swaps and recipe adaptations for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Go to **[www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes)** for ideas on what to cook.



Rise &  
shine!

# Breakfast

Try these easy swaps for healthier  
and delicious breakfasts



- Swap a **fruit yogurt** for a **plain low-fat yogurt** and some **fresh berries** and save 46kcal and 2.3g fat.
- Eat a **fruit and fibre cereal**, instead of **granola**, and save 170kcal and 10g fat.
- Plain **rice crispies**, rather than **chocolate-flavoured cereal**, saves 1.5 tsp sugar. Don't undo the benefits by adding sugar to the plain rice crispies.
- Use **wholegrain bread** for toast and boost your fibre intake for a healthy gut.
- Swap **whole milk** for **semi-skimmed milk** on your cereal – you'll save 30kcal and 3g fat, and still get the calcium you need for strong bones and teeth.
- Switch from **butter** to a **vegetable-based spread** to cut back on saturated fat, and choose a lower-fat alternative if you're watching your weight.
- Try a **medium skinny cappuccino**, instead of a **latte**, and save a whopping 100kcal and 8g fat (of which 5g is saturated fat).





## Full English breakfast

**Replace** hash browns  
with wholegrain toast

**Choose** one good  
quality, grilled sausage

**Swap** fried eggs for  
poached or boiled eggs

**Switch** streaky bacon for  
unsmoked rindless, grilled  
back bacon

**Opt for** reduced-sugar and  
salt baked beans instead of the  
usual and steamed mushrooms  
instead of fried



If you are using leftovers from previous meals for breakfast, keep an eye on your portion sizes. Serve smaller amounts than you would for dinner.

## PORRIDGE OATS

- Using water instead of semi-skimmed milk saves about 145kcal and 5g fat in just one bowl. But make sure you top up on calcium from low-fat dairy foods and drinks through the rest of the day.
- If you use milk, choose skimmed (red top) or semi-skimmed (green top) instead of full fat (blue top) to reduce the calories and cut down on fat.
- Blueberries, mango, pineapple, raisins, banana, and grated apple all go well in porridge – adding sweetness, flavour and extra vitamins and minerals.
- Watch your portion size – 3 tbsps of dried oats is a good portion as a guide.
- A couple of teaspoons of sugar, syrup or honey all add a touch of sweetness to this healthy, high-fibre breakfast. But sweetening with artificial sweetener or some cinnamon instead saves at least 40kcal.



## SALT FISH BULJOL

- Measure how much oil you usually use, then try cutting it down – 1 tsp per person is a good target; it contains 36kcal and 4g fat compared with 108kcal and 12g fat in 1 tbsp.
- Use unsaturated oil like rapeseed, sunflower or olive oil, which are better for your cholesterol levels than saturated oils like palm oil.
- 50g salted cod fish (about half the size of a deck of cards) has as much as 9g salt. That's one and a half times the maximum daily recommendation for adults. Soaking the fish overnight and changing the water a few times will help to lower the amount of salt.
- For an almost salt-free alternative try switching the salted codfish with unsalted cod or other white fish – pollock, whiting or coley all work well.
- Serving with salad? Go easy on the dressing – 1 tbsp mayo adds an extra 104kcal and 11g fat. Switching to a light mayo cuts the fat and calories by up to half.



At home, school or work, a nutritious lunch will help you keep your energy levels high all afternoon. Try out these easy swaps for lunch this week.



- Swap a **canned drink** for a diet version and save 7 tsp sugar.
- Cut back on fat by choosing **baked crisps** as a healthier alternative to fried. Watch the salt content, though.
- Choose a **two-finger chocolate wafer biscuit**, rather than a standard chocolate bar, and save on both fat and calories.
- Switch a can of **creamy tomato soup** for a clear soup, such as **chicken noodle**, and save 170kcal and 13g fat. Don't forget to check the salt content, which can be high in canned soups.
- Try a **ham salad sandwich** instead of a **club sandwich**, to save 135kcal and 16g fat. Make your own and cut out even more fat by using less spread.
- **Open sandwiches** reduce calories and fat by using half the amount of bread.





## Packed lunch

Switch your **crisps** for a different snack – **fromage frais** or **carrot sticks** are good choices

Swap **sugary drinks** for a **bottle of water**

Take an **apple** – or any **fruit** you like!

Add some **cucumber** or **lettuce** to a **cheese sandwich** on **wholegrain bread**, or to a **ham sandwich** on a **granary roll**



## JERK CHICKEN WITH RICE AND PEAS

- Use less rice and more peas.
- Slash the salt – cut down gradually over time to allow your taste buds to get used to the new taste.
- If you are buying jerk seasoning off the shelf, check the label for salt – the higher up the ingredients list it is, the more salt it contains.
- Chicken is the right choice for a lower-fat meat – using a chicken breast and removing the skin saves about 15g fat and 140kcal.
- Whether grilling, roasting or barbecuing your jerk chicken, give it a go without any oil – keeping it covered until the last 10 minutes of cooking time will give it a crispy outside without drying it out.
- Plantain on the side? Boil, drain, brush or spray with oil, then grill or bake instead of frying, to save about 70kcal and 8g fat per serving.
- Remove oil from fried plantain by patting it with kitchen roll when it comes out of the pan to absorb the excess.
- Adding salsa on the side will add some extra vitamins and minerals – use an artificial sweetener instead of sugar and save about 50kcal per tbsp.



## JOLLOF RICE WITH CHICKEN

- You only need a very small amount of oil to fry off the ingredients if you use a non-stick pan – using 5 sprays of a cooking spray instead of 3 tbsp oil saves a massive 319kcal and about 35g fat.
- Low-salt and reduced-salt stock cubes contain at least 25 per cent less salt than standard stock cubes. Better still, make your own stock at home.
- Don't hold back on the ginger, herbs and spices for flavour.
- Give your dish a healthier balance by using more okra and peppers and less rice – replace 2 tbsp rice with extra vegetables and you will save around 100kcal without leaving you hungry.
- Have one chicken thigh instead of two and add 1 tbsp red kidney beans per serving – you'll still get bags of protein and an extra 3g fibre, but save almost 200kcal and 3.5g fat.





What's  
for tea?

# Dinner

At the end of the day, it's great to sit down as a family and catch up over a meal. Keep it healthy by trying out some of these tasty swaps.



## INJERA WITH BEEF SAUCE (STEW)

- You can be a bit adventurous and try using different flour for your injera – try millet, wheat or teff flour. You can even mix two different types.
- For a bubbly texture and a slightly sour taste, try fermenting your batter for a short time.
- Replace ghee or butter with unsaturated fat such as rapeseed, sunflower or olive oil: unsaturated fat is better for your cholesterol.
- Use less sugar, honey or marmalade – try with artificial sweeteners instead.
- Go easy on the salt.
- If you like your sauce with more liquid to soak up with your injera, just add extra water, lower the cooking temperature and let the sauce simmer.
- You only need a small amount of oil to fry the onions. Choose unsaturated oils instead of ghee.
- Use more spices like chilli, cumin, pepper, garlic and ginger to add flavour, instead of salt.
- Choose lean meat and cut off visible fat before cooking. You can replace red meat with chicken, which is even better skinless.
- If you use liver, cook the classic way and smother with onions in a non-stick pan – there's no need to deep-fry it before adding the sauce.
- Use pulses like beans and lentils to replace some of the meat.
- Add more mushrooms, tomatoes, aubergines, garden eggs and onions.





## GOAT CURRY

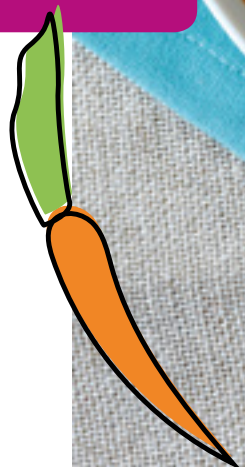
- Goat and mutton curry is a tasty favourite but the meat tends to be fatty. Use the leanest cuts and trim off any fat you can see before cooking.
- Replace some of the meat with extra beans for a higher-fibre and lower-fat recipe. Or bulk out your curry with extra vegetables – okra, aubergine and carrots work well.
- Try cutting down on the use of oil – 1 tsp per person is a good final target, and contains 36kcal and 4g fat.
- Flatbreads are perfect for soaking up the curry – and there's no need to add extra butter. Bake or grill on a lightly oiled griddle rather than shallow frying.
- Rice and flatbread are both starchy carbohydrates – if you choose to have both, watch the portions, or switch some for a side salad instead.



For more tasty meal ideas go to  
[www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes)

## CHICKEN PEPPER SOUP

- Don't hold back on the spices and chilli for flavour – you will need less salt and fewer stock cubes.
- Reduce the amount of yam or potatoes and chicken and bulk out your recipe with extra of your favourite vegetables like carrot, garden eggs or tomatoes. They are lower in calories and packed with extra vitamins and minerals. Swap one medium-sized potato for one carrot and save 30kcal.
- Once cooked, skim and throw away any fat you can see on the top.







## ROAST DINNER

- Season your **roast** with **pepper, garlic** and any **herbs** you like, to keep your salt intake to a minimum.
- If you're making **gravy** from your roast meat, skim the fat off the top before serving – skimming just 1 tbsp fat cuts 12g of fat and at least 100 calories.
- Stick to **leaner meat** – skinless **chicken** and **turkey** are high in protein and low in fat. If you go for beef, trim off any visible fat before cooking.
- Vegetarian? For a meat-free roast use **Quorn™** or roast meat substitutes, which are generally low in fat and calories.
- Make your **roast potatoes** big and chunky, so there's less surface area to soak up oil. Rapeseed oil is a good choice for roasts, or opt for a low-calorie cooking spray instead.
- Add lots of your favourite veg for more colour and nutrition. Steam your greens, such as broccoli and cabbage, and roast your root veg, like parsnips and carrots.



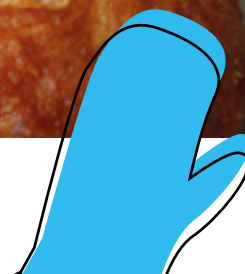
Feeling  
peckish?

# Snacks

**In a healthy, balanced diet, there's room for snacks – and the occasional treat. With a few smart choices, you can keep hunger at bay throughout the day.**

Feeling hungry between meals? The choice you make could be adding as much fat and as many calories as if you were eating a whole meal. Check out how your favourite snacks compare.

	KCAL	FAT
2 pieces of fried chicken	737	44g
1 beef patty	556	33g
6 BBQ chicken wings	548	12g
100g chocolate bar	525	31g
2 Caribbean dumplings (chin chin or puff puff)	420	17g
Large bag of plantain chips	409	22g
Tuna mayonnaise sandwich (2 slices bread)	357	12g
Small portion of fries	269	15g





# Snack ideas

**Not everyone with diabetes requires regular snacks. If you treat your diabetes with insulin and/or certain Type 2 medication, you may need a snack to prevent a hypo.**

If you have Type 1 diabetes and have been on a carb-counting course such as DAFNE, you will have been told that snacks with less than 10g of carbs don't usually require extra insulin injections. If you're on a pump you will probably still be covering it with a bolus. For people with Type 2 diabetes, who are trying to limit their carb intake, swapping your snacks can also be useful. If your main focus is weight loss, choose snacks with the least amount of calories.

## SNACKS UNDER 10g CARBS

- 1 x 115g pot of sugar-free jelly: 1.2g carbs and 8kcal
- 25g toasted seed mix: 3.8g carbs and 132kcal
- 25g almonds: 1.7g carbs and 153kcal
- ¼ pot (50g) of reduced-fat hummus and ½ packet (75g) of fresh sliced peppers:

9.3g carbs and 140kcal

- 1 chopped boiled egg and 100g carrot batons: 9.4g carbs and 105kcal
- 25g root veg crisps: 10g carbs and 129kcal
- ½ an avocado (80g): 1.5g carbs and 158kcal
- 1 kiwi fruit: 8.5g carbs and 44kcal

## SNACKS 50KCAL OR UNDER

- 1 small apple
- 80g blueberries
- 1 handful of grapes
- 2 kiwi fruits
- 80g mango
- 1 slice of melon
- 2 oranges
- 2 small plums
- 1 peach or nectarine
- 3 rings of pineapple
- 30g ready-to-eat, partially rehydrated prunes
- 1 x 14g mini box of raisins
- 1 rice cake with 1 tsp pure fruit spread
- 1 lighter cheese slice with ¼ cucumber
- 1 lighter cheese triangle and 8 cherry tomatoes
- 1 x 115g pot sugar-free jelly

## SNACKS 100KCAL OR UNDER

- 4 bread sticks
- 80g defrosted frozen cherries with 50g 0% fat Greek-style yogurt whizzed together with ice
- 10 almonds
- 100g carrot batons, ¼ cucumber, sliced and 50g salsa
- ½ a pot (300g) shop-bought fresh tomato soup

## SNACKS 150KCAL OR UNDER

- 25g unsalted nuts
- 1 tsp (15g) almond butter spread onto slices of a chopped apple
- 100g 0% fat Greek-style yogurt with 100g blueberries
- 2 small crispbreads topped with 60g 0% fat plain cottage cheese
- 25g toasted seed mix
- 1 (25g) slice of Edam cheese with 1 apple
- 2 small crispbread multiseed thins with 1 x 30g slice chicken breast
- 2 rice cakes with ¼ pot (50g) tzatziki dip

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