

STAYING HEALTHY with *diabetes*

WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a metabolic condition that affects how your body uses glucose, the main source of energy for your cells. Carbohydrates in your diet are broken down into glucose before being absorbed into your bloodstream. If you have diabetes, your cells are not able to take in the glucose from your bloodstream. This means your cells are not getting the energy they need and your blood glucose levels remain high.

Insulin is a hormone produced by your pancreas that allows glucose to enter your cells. If you have diabetes, insulin is unable to do its job and your cells cannot take in the glucose they need for energy.

I'VE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH PRE-DIABETES OR TYPE 2 DIABETES—WHAT'S NEXT?

Step 1: Adhere to your doctor-prescribed medication plan and check your blood glucose levels regularly

If your doctor has diagnosed you with Type 2 diabetes, you may be prescribed oral medications or insulin.



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Make sure you keep up with your medication regimen. It is also important to regularly check your blood glucose levels before and after meals, especially as you begin new medications.

Your Harmons' Pharmacists can help you with medication and blood glucose monitoring questions.

Step 2: Engage in daily physical activity and maintain a healthy body weight.

People with diabetes have an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. It is important to keep blood glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol, and body weight in check to reduce your risk. Being physically active can:

- Lower blood glucose levels and burn calories.
- Make your cells more sensitive to insulin.
- Help you lose weight and keep it off. Weight loss increases insulin sensitivity and helps keep blood glucose levels in check.
- Lower blood pressure and cholesterol, which are critical in preventing heart attack and stroke.

Find an activity you enjoy and can stick with! Simply walking 30 minutes daily will improve glucose levels and heart health.

Step 3: Manage your diet.

A healthy diabetes diet is similar to a regular healthy diet, but with extra emphasis on managing foods that affect your blood glucose.

Carbohydrates: Foods that contain carbohydrates, or "carbs," raise your blood glucose. When planning meals, it is important to look at the total carbohydrate content of the meal, not just sugar content. Sugar is a type of carbohydrate, but ALL carbs will raise your blood glucose.

Protein and Fat: Protein and fat are necessary components of a healthy diet, but they do not increase your blood glucose. It is important to choose lean sources of protein and heart-healthy fats to help reduce your risk of heart disease. Including protein and healthy fat in every meal and snack will help slow the digestion of carbohydrates and cause less of a glucose spike in your blood.

HOW DO I DEVELOP A HEALTHY MEAL PLAN?

It is important that you establish a consistent eating pattern—this means eating meals and snacks regularly throughout the day at planned times. You will also need to eat about the same amount at every meal or snack, paying particular attention to carbohydrates. The amount of carbohydrates you need at each meal will depend on a variety of factors, including your age, weight, and physical activity level. As a good place to start, aim for about:

- 15 grams of carbohydrate for each snack
- 45-60 grams of carbohydrate for each meal

HOW DO I KNOW HOW MANY CARBOHYDRATES ARE IN THE FOODS I EAT?

Before you can begin counting the carbohydrates in the foods you eat, you need to have an understanding of what foods contain carbohydrates.

- Starchy foods like bread, rice, pasta, cereal, and crackers
- Fruit and fruit juices
- Starchy vegetables, like potatoes, peas, and corn
- Dairy products, like milk and yogurt
- Legumes, like beans and lentils
- Sweets and snack foods, like cake, cookies, and soda
- Sugar free snacks and candies

HOW MANY GRAMS OF CARBOHYDRATE DO THESE FOODS CONTAIN?

Review the nutrition facts label to determine how many grams of total carbohydrate are in one serving of the food. If nutrition facts aren't available, you will have to make an estimate, just remember:

- 1 serving of grains, beans, fruit, or starch veggie = **15 grams carbohydrate**
- 1 serving yogurt or milk = **12 grams carbohydrate**

1 GRAIN SERVING = 15 GRAMS CARB

- 1 slice of bread (1 oz)
- 1 6-inch tortilla
- ½ cup cooked oatmeal
- ⅓ cup cooked pasta or rice
- ¼ bagel
- ½ English muffin or hamburger bun

- 4-6 crackers
- 1 ½ cups puffed cereal
- ¾ cup unsweetened cereal
- ½ cup sugar frosted cereal

1 FRUIT SERVING = 15 GRAMS CARB

- 1 small piece fresh fruit (4 oz)
- ½ cup canned or frozen fruit
- 1 Tbsp jam or jelly
- 1 cup melon cubes
- ¾ cup berries
- ½ cup apple, grapefruit, orange, or pineapple juice
- ⅓ cup grape, prune, cranberry cocktail, or fruit juice blends

1 STARCHY VEG SERVING = 15 GRAMS CARB

- ½ cup corn, green peas, or mashed potatoes
- ¼ large baked potato

1 LEGUME SERVING = 15 GRAMS CARB

- ½ cup beans (garbanzo, black, pinto, kidney, etc)
- ½ cup lentils
- ⅔ cup lima beans

1 DAIRY SERVING = 12 GRAMS CARB

- 1 cup skim or part-skim milk
- ⅔ cup yogurt (fat-free plain or artificial sweetener)
- 1 cup soy milk

