



Healthy Eating, Diets & Meal Planning

The foods you eat have big effects on your health and quality of life.

Why should you eat healthy?

- Research continues to link serious diseases to a poor diet.
- A good diet can improve all aspects of life, from brain function to physical performance. In fact, food affects all your cells and organs.
(If you participate in exercise or sports, there is no doubt a healthy diet will help you perform better)

Calories and energy balance

Total calorie intake plays a role in weight control and health.

- If you put in more calories than you burn, you will store them as new muscle or body fat.
- If you consume fewer calories than you burn every day, you will lose weight. If you want to lose weight, you must create some form of calorie deficit.
- In contrast, if you are trying to gain weight and increase muscle mass, then you need to eat more than your body burns.

Understanding Macronutrients

The three macronutrients

1. Carbohydrates
2. Fats
3. Protein

These nutrients are needed in relatively large amounts. They provide calories and have various functions in your body.

Here are some common foods within each macronutrient group:

- **Carbs:** 4 calories per gram. All starchy foods like breads, pasta and potatoes. It also includes fruits, legumes, juice, sugar and some dairy products.
- **Protein:** 4 calories per gram. Main sources include meat and fish, dairy, eggs, legumes and vegetarian alternatives like tofu.
- **Fats:** 9 calories per gram. Main sources include nuts, seeds, oils, butter, cheese, oily fish and fatty meat.

** How much of each macronutrient you should consume depends on your lifestyle and goals, as well as your personal preferences. Macronutrients are the 3 main nutrients needed in large amounts: carbs, fats, and protein.*

Other “essential” nutrients needed in a diet in order to survive include:

- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Iron
- Calcium
- Vitamins A to K

Eating Whole Foods is Important

You should aim to consume whole foods at least 80-90% of the time.

The term “whole food” generally describes natural, unprocessed foods containing only one ingredient. Whole foods tend to be nutrient-dense and have a lower energy density. This means that they have fewer calories and more nutrients per serving than processed foods.

Gluten Free Diet

The gluten free diet is very helpful for suffers of IBS with celiac disease, non-celiac gluten sensitivity and wheat allergy. If an individual has had a diagnosis of having coeliac disease or is sensitive or allergic to gluten or wheat, it is advisable to follow a gluten free diet.

Below is a list of foods to avoid on a gluten free diet and a list of good foods that are gluten free.

Foods to avoid	Gluten Free foods
Biscuits	Artichoke
Beer	Asparagus
Bread	Avocado
Cakes	Bell peppers
Cereals (except a few listed on the left)	Broccoli
Chocolate bars	Brussel sprouts
Cookies	Cabbage
Corned beef	Cauliflower
Couscous	Celery
Crackers	Chickpeas
Donuts	Coconut
Gravies	Cucumber
Malt Beverages	Green Beans
Malt Vinegar	Kale
Monosodium glutamate	Lemons
Muffins	Lentils
Pasta	Lettuce
Pastries	Limes
Pies	Mushrooms
Pretzels	Olives
Pizza	French mustard, pepper, honey, horseradish, jam, jellies, olive oil, salsa, salt, sesame oil, syrup

Sauces	
Sausages	Gluten free bread, cereal, oats
Salami	Beans,
Sauces- many have wheat as thickener	Nuts
Soups- many have wheat as a thickener	Quinoa
Wheat flour	Beef, cod, chicken, cold cuts, duck, fish, lamb, mince meat, port, salmon, shellfish, trout, turkey
	Almond milk, cider, fruit juices, sodas,
	Butter, cheese (except blue cheese), cream, milk, eggs, sour cream, yogurt (plain)

Kosher Diet

“Kosher” is a term used to describe food that complies with the strict dietary standards of traditional Jewish law. For many Jews, kosher is about more than just health or food safety, it is about reverence and adherence to religious tradition.

Kosher dietary laws are comprehensive and provide a rigid framework of rules that not only outline which foods are allowed or forbidden but also mandate how permitted foods must be produced, processed, and prepared prior to consumption.

Certain food combinations are strictly forbidden.

Some of the main kosher dietary guidelines ban certain food pairings-particularly that of meat and dairy.

There are three main kosher food categories:

- Meat (fleishig): mammals or fowl, as well as products derived from them, including bones or broth.
- Dairy (milchig): Milk, cheese, butter, and yogurt.
- Pareve: Any food that is not meat or dairy, including fish, eggs, and plant-based foods.

According to kosher tradition, any food categorized as meat may never be served or eaten at the same meal as a dairy product.

Furthermore, all utensils and equipment used to process, and clean meat and dairy must be kept separate- even down to the sinks in which they are washed. After eating meat, you must wait a designated amount of time before consuming any dairy product. The particular length of time varies among different Jewish customs but is usually between one and six hours.

The 4 major food laws:

1. Land animals must have cloven (split) hooves and must chew the cud, meaning that they must eat grass.
2. Seafood must have fins and scales. Eating shellfish is not allowed.
3. It is forbidden to eat birds of prey. Only clean birds, meaning birds that do not eat other animals, can be eaten. Poultry is allowed.
4. Meat and dairy cannot be eaten together. Jews who follow these dietary rules cannot eat cheeseburgers for example. Often this rule is extended further, so that people wait up to six hours after eating meat before they eat dairy.

Treif

Food that is not allowed is called treif. Examples include shellfish, pork products and food that has not been slaughtered in the correct way, known as shechitah. Animals must have their throats cut with a sharp knife by a shochet, a person trained to slaughter animals in a kosher way. The blood must then be drained from the animal. No animals that have died naturally can be eaten.

Parev

Neutral foods, that can be eaten with either meat or dairy, are called parev and these include vegetables, pasta and rice. As long as these are washed thoroughly before eating, no kosher rules will be broken.

Vegan Diets

Highlights

- Vegan diets only include plant-based foods.
- Research has shown that vegan or vegetarian diets rich in plant-based food are associated with lower LDL cholesterol, improved blood glucose and improved blood pressure.
- There are few nutrients that individuals following a vegan diet should be mindful to get enough of, including vitamin B12, calcium, iron and certain omega-3 fatty acids.

The Basics

Vegan and vegetarian diets appear to be among the top food trends, but there is evidence that some people have been eating a predominantly plant-based or vegetarian diet for centuries. However, it wasn't until 1944 that the term "vegan" was coined. Essentially, individuals who follow a vegan diet have opted to remove all animal-based foods from their diet. Many choose vegan clothing, household items and personal care items as well. Most individuals who adopt a vegan diet are doing so for the perceived health benefits, to advocate for animal rights, environmental reasons or all of the above.

What Foods Make Up a Vegan Diet?

Vegan diets are made up of only plant-based foods. This type of diet includes fruits, vegetables, soy, legumes, nuts and nut butters, plant-based dairy alternatives, sprouted or fermented plant foods and whole grains. Vegan diets don't include animal foods like eggs, dairy, meat, poultry or seafood. They also are devoid of animal byproducts such as honey (made by bees) and lesser-known animal-based ingredients like whey, casein, lactose, egg white albumen, gelatin, carmine, shellac, animal-derived vitamin D3 and fish-derived omega-3 fatty acids.

Basics for Diets When You Have Diabetes

Start with the basics

Watch your portion sizes and calories. Cut back on fried foods, sweets, sugary drinks, and anything salty or fatty. Focus instead on lots of veggies, with whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, fruit, and healthy fats. You may need to eat every few hours to keep your blood sugar levels steady. Often it is best if a doctor or diabetes educator can help fine-tune a diet so that it works for you.

Myths and facts about diabetes and diet

Myth: You must avoid sugar at all costs.

Fact: You can enjoy your favorite treats as long as you plan properly and limit hidden sugars. Dessert doesn't have to be off limits, as long as it's a part of a healthy meal plan.

Myth: You have to cut way down on carbs.

Fact: The [type of carbohydrates](#) you eat as well as serving size is key. Focus on whole grain carbs instead of starchy carbs since they're high in fiber and digested slowly, keeping blood sugar levels more even.

Myth: You'll need special diabetic meals.

Fact: The principles of healthy eating are the same—whether or not you're diabetic. Expensive diabetic foods generally offer no special benefit.

Myth: A high-protein diet is best.

Fact: Studies have shown that eating too much [protein](#), especially animal protein, may actually cause insulin resistance, a key factor in diabetes. A healthy diet includes protein, carbohydrates, and fats. Our bodies need all three to function properly. The key is a balanced diet.

As with any healthy eating program, a diabetic diet is more about your overall dietary pattern rather than obsessing over specific foods. Aim to eat more natural, unprocessed food and less packaged and convenience foods.

What should a diabetic eat more of?

- Healthy fats from nuts, olive oil, fish oils, flax seeds, or avocados.
- Fruits and vegetables—ideally fresh, the more colorful the better, whole fruit rather than juices.
- Higher-fiber cereals and breads made from whole grains.
- Fish and shellfish, organic chicken or turkey.
- High-quality protein such as eggs, beans, low-fat dairy, and unsweetened yogurt.

What should a diabetic eat less of?

- Packaged and fast foods, especially those high in sugar, baked goods, sweets, chips, desserts.
- White bread, sugary cereals, refined pastas or rice.
- Processed meat and red meat.
- Low-fat products that have replaced fat with added sugar, such as fat-free yogurt.

General Nutrition Guide to Follow When Meal Planning

- You should aim to consume whole foods at least 80-90% of the time.
- Try to base your diet around these health food groups
 - Vegetables:** these should play a fundamental role at most meals. They are low in calories yet full of important micronutrients and fiber.
 - Fruits:** a natural sweet treat, fruit provides micronutrients and antioxidants that can help improve health.
 - Meat and fish:** meat and fish have been the major sources of protein throughout evolution. They are a staple in the human diet, although vegetarian and vegan diets have become popular as well.
 - Nuts and seeds:** these are one of the best fat sources available and also contain important micronutrients.
 - Eggs:** considered one of the healthiest foods on the planet, whole eggs pack a powerful combination of protein, beneficial fats and micronutrients.

- Dairy:** Dairy products such as natural yogurt and milk are convenient, low-cost sources of protein and calcium.
- Healthy starches:** for those who aren't on a low-carb diet, whole food starchy foods like potatoes, quinoa and Ezekiel bread are healthy and nutritious.
- Beans and legumes:** these are fantastic sources of fiber, protein and micronutrients.
- Beverages:** water should make up the majority of fluid intake, along with drinks like coffee and tea.
- Herbs and spices:** these are often very high in nutrients and beneficial plant compounds.
- Avoid the following foods as much as possible:
 - Sugar-based products:** foods high in sugar, especially sugary drinks, are linked to obesity and type 2 diabetes
 - Trans fats:** Also known as partially hydrogenated fats, trans fats have been linked to serious diseases, such as heart disease
 - Refined carbs:** Foods that are high in refined carbs, such as white bread, are linked to overeating, obesity and metabolic disease
 - Vegetable oils:** While many people believe these are healthy, vegetable oils can disrupt your body's omega 6-to-3 balance, which can cause problems
 - Processed low-fat products:** Often disguised as healthy alternatives, low-fat products usually contain a lot of sugar to make them taste better.
- Portion control and calorie intake is a key factor in weight control and health
 - By controlling your portions, you are more likely to avoid consuming too many calories.
- Tailor your diet to your goals
 - Assess your calorie needs based on factors like your activity levels and weight goals.
- As always, balance is key. Unless you have a specific disease or dietary requirement, no food needs to be off limits forever. By totally eliminating certain foods, you may actually increase cravings and decrease long-term success.

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