



# Daily Meal Planning Guide

Managing Your Diabetes® patient education program

Good nutrition is one of the most basic and important diabetes care tools. Eating right can help control blood sugar. And good control helps protect your long-term health. This meal planning guide is a great way to begin making smart food choices.

Whether you are following a calorie-level meal plan, counting carbohydrates, using exchanges or just trying to improve the overall nutritional value of your current eating patterns, the food lists on this sheet will give you a solid starting point.

Think of this plan as only a temporary guide. Keep in mind that every person with diabetes should have a customized meal plan that provides more freedom in terms of food choices. Just about any food, including your favorites, can be fit into your meal plan. A Registered Dietitian (RD) can work with you to develop the plan that best meets your needs and lifestyle. Ask your doctor, diabetes educator, hospital, or local diabetes association for the names of dietitians in your area who specialize in diabetes.

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# Meal Planning Options

Many effective meal plans involve tracking what you eat. Two of the most popular approaches are counting calories for regulating weight and counting carbohydrate for blood sugar control. Your diabetes healthcare professional will recommend the best approach for your needs.

## Calorie Meal Plans

The table below shows sample meal plans, by number of servings, for different calorie levels. To maintain a healthy weight, choose a calorie level close to what you're eating now. If you need to gain or lose weight, ask your doctor, dietitian or educator which plan to use. Each plan provides about half of its calories from carbohydrate and less than 30% of calories from fat, based on choosing skim milk and medium or lower fat meats and cheeses.

## Sample Meal Plans

Calories per day	1,200	1,400	1,600	1,800	2,200	2,800	Other:
<b>Carbohydrates</b>							
Starch (15 gram carb servings)	6	6	6	7	9	11	
Vegetables (5 gram carb servings)*	3	3	3	4	4	5	
Fruit (15 gram carb servings)	3	3	3	3	4	4	
Milk & yogurt (12 gram carb servings)**	2	2	2-3	2-3	2-3	2-3	
Other carbohydrates							
<b>Meat &amp; Meat Substitutes</b>	4 oz	4 oz	5 oz	5 oz	6 oz	7 oz	
<b>Fat (5 gram fat servings)</b>							
20% of total calories	2	4	4	5	6	8	
40% of total calories	5	8	9	11	13	18	

\* Three vegetable servings provide the same amount of carbohydrates as one serving of other carbohydrate food groups.

\*\* Teenagers, young adults to age 24, and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding need 1200 mg of calcium each day. That equals about 4 servings of milk and yogurt. Eating fat-free and nonfat milk and yogurt will keep fat grams and calories lower.



## Carbohydrate Counting

Carbohydrate (starch and sugar) is the main nutrient in food that raises blood sugar. When you plan meals based on carbohydrate counting, count only the foods that contain carbohydrates. Use either the portion sizes shown in the food list, or calculate the carbohydrate (CHO) grams using the bolded numbers in each food list. If you are using a packaged food with a nutrition label, count the number of carbohydrate grams for the serving size.