

HEALTHY EATING FOR DIABETES - A STARTING POINT

Diabetes is a condition in which the body is unable to control the amount of sugar in the blood. By looking after your diet and being your ideal weight it is possible to control your blood sugar. You may also need tablets or insulin.

Foods to cut down on

Sugar, glucose, honey

Sweets, chocolates, sweet biscuits and cakes, sweet cereals

Sweetened squash and soft drinks (including lucozade)

Jelly and sweet desserts

Tinned fruit in syrup

Foods that may be taken

Bread, rice, pasta, potatoes, breakfast cereals (avoid the sugar-coated ones). Have these starchy foods at each meal

Plain biscuits and crispbreads (e.g. Maria biscuits, Digestives, crackers)

Lean meats, fish, poultry, cheese, eggs - try to cut down on the fried varieties

Pulses e.g. lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, baked beans, all types of beans

Milk (skimmed/semi-skimmed is best)

Yoghurts (diet or natural)

Fruit x 4-5 portions per day (a handful of grapes/cherries/strawberries is a portion). Spread the portions throughout the day. Tinned fruit in natural juice may be taken.

Sugar-free, diet drinks and sweeteners

Diabetic Products

Special 'diabetic' products are not needed in your diet - they are very expensive and often high in calories and fat. They may also cause diarrhoea if eaten in large amounts and are of no benefit to you.

Alcohol

Alcohol is high in calories. If you are overweight it is important to reduce alcohol intake. Use low-calories or diet mixers with your drink. Never drink alcohol on an empty stomach.

Exercise

Exercise helps to control diabetes and weight. Walking is a good form of exercise. Check with your doctor for more advice.

This is basic advice. Ask your doctor to refer you to the dietitian for more detailed dietary advice. It is advisable to see a dietitian at least once a year for a detailed dietary review.