

Patient information

Top tips for diet and Type 2 Diabetes

All carbohydrate foods need to be taken into account; it is not just sugar in the diet that affects blood glucose levels. 'Carbohydrate' includes:

Starchy foods (turned into glucose)	Naturally occurring sugars	Added sugars (sucrose)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread • Pasta • Rice • Potatoes • Cereals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit (fructose) • Dairy foods (lactose) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweets • Chocolate • Sugary drinks • Cakes • Desserts

Aim to keep portions of carbohydrate similar at each meal.

Choose good quality carbs e.g. high fibre, wholegrain and 'brown' varieties.

Minimum recommended amount of carbs is 130g per day but this depends on activity levels. Aim for 40 - 50g at each meal to start with.

Methods of carbohydrate counting

1. **Carbs and Cals book or mobile phone app:** Photos of food and provides amount of carbohydrates in varying portion sizes (www.carbsandcals.com).
2. **Food labels:** Look for 'total carbohydrate' in the nutritional information table usually found on the back or side of packaging.

3. Handy measures

- 2 medium slices of bread (30g carbs) are approximately equal to 3 medium serving spoons of rice, pasta or mashed potato or 3 egg sized potatoes (all 30g Carbs).
- 1 piece of fruit (15g carbs), or 1 fruit yoghurt (15g carbs) or 1 small packet of crisps (15g carbs) are all roughly equal to 1 medium slice of bread (15g carbs).
- A meal containing 2 slices of medium bread, a piece of fruit and a yoghurt is roughly equal to 6 serving spoons of pasta, rice or potatoes (60g carbs).

Healthy eating principles

1. If trying to lose weight

- ✓ Use a smaller plate. Dish out vegetables first and let this fill up half the plate.
- ✓ Separate the different foods on the plate rather than piling them up on each other.
- ✓ Resist the temptation for second helping, have a glass of water first.

2. Five a day

- ✓ Aim for two portions of fruit and three or more portions of vegetables/salad.
- ✓ A portion of any type of fruit is a palm full. Dried fruit is half a palm full.
- ✓ Aim for variety – a rainbow of colours for fruits and vegetables.

3. **Choose low calorie drinks.** Avoid drinking fruit juice, smoothies and milk in between meals.

4. **Snacks.** Choose low carbohydrate options for snacks – see separate information sheet.

5. **Reduce saturated fat intake** as this increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

6. **Diabetes products are not recommended.** They can still affect blood glucose levels, are high in fat and calories and contain sorbitol which may have a laxative effect if eaten in large amounts.

7. **Eat more fish**

- ✓ As they are good sources of protein.
- ✓ Oily fish are also a good source of heart protecting omega-3: aim for two portions of oily fish a week, such as mackerel, sardine or salmon.

8. Eat more beans

- ✓ They are a good source of fibre and protein.
- ✓ They have little impact on blood glucose levels (except baked beans due to the sugary sauce).
- ✓ Can help with controlling blood lipid profile such as cholesterol levels.

9. Cut back on salt

- ✓ Try flavouring your foods with herbs, spices, garlic and lemon.
- ✓ Cut back on processed foods & read labels and choose lower salt options when possible.

For more input with carbohydrate awareness

The diabetes team offer a carbohydrate awareness group education session, usually lasting two hours. The course is run by a diabetes specialist nurse and a diabetes specialist dietitian.

To get a referral please ask the inpatient diabetes specialist nurse or dietitian or your practice nurse, GP or any health professional in the diabetes centre.

Alternatively, if group education sessions are not for you, a diabetes specialist nurse and dietitian can follow you up via email or phone and arrange individual outpatient appointments.

To be referred onto a group session and/or for one-to-one input or indeed for any other queries regarding carbohydrate awareness please contact us on:

Phone: 01284 713311

Email: wsh-tr.westsuffolksns@nhs.net

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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