

Diabetes Management: Choosing Healthy Carbohydrates When Carbohydrate Counting

Carbohydrates are an important part of a healthy diet. Everyone needs carbs, even people with diabetes.

But carbohydrates have the biggest effect on your blood sugar. So you need to track how many carbs you eat each day to keep your blood sugar in a healthy range.

Your meal plan will tell you how many carbohydrates you are aiming for at each meal and snack.

Unhealthy carbohydrate foods like candy, desserts, chips, and sweetened drinks will raise your blood sugar quickly. They also offer little or no nutritional value. These should be enjoyed only in small amounts.

Instead, it's best to choose healthy carbohydrates to get all the energy and nutrients your body needs. Healthy choices also help prevent long-term health problems.

Some of the healthiest carbohydrate foods are fresh fruits and vegetables. Just like anyone else, people with diabetes can benefit from a diet rich in these foods.

Most people don't get enough of either.

Just make sure to measure your portion sizes so you can count the number of carbs in these servings correctly.

For example, a small apple does not have the same amount of carbohydrate as a large apple and will not raise your blood sugar as high.

Also know that starchy vegetables, like corn and potatoes, will have higher amounts of carbohydrate than non-starchy vegetables like broccoli, carrots, or tomatoes.

Another healthy way to get your daily carbs is through whole grains and legumes like beans, peas, and lentils.

These carbohydrate choices are often high in fiber. Fiber helps fill you up and keeps you feeling full longer. It also does not raise your blood sugar as fast as other carbohydrates. It can help you better manage your diabetes.

When shopping, look for whole-wheat pasta, brown rice, or cereal made from whole grains.

These food choices, along with fruits and vegetables, form the foundation of a healthy diet.

Lastly, dairy products like milk and cheese are another healthy option. But choose low-fat versions to get the calcium and carbohydrates you need while limiting fat and calories.

Carbohydrates affect your blood sugar. But they also provide your body with much needed energy.

Your personal meal plan will include the number of carbs you should aim for at each meal and snack based on your lifestyle and weight goals.

To make the most of these carbohydrates, make your choices healthy.

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Choose fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, peas, lentils and low-fat dairy to get all the energy and nutrients your body needs for good health.