

# Finding Your Insulin-to-Carb Ratio When Carb Counting

To use advanced carb counting, you'll need to know your insulin-to-carb ratio.

It's also called an I:C ratio or ICR. Your insulin-to-carb ratio tells you how many carbohydrates 1 unit of rapid-acting bolus insulin will cover.

An I:C ratio is usually written as units of insulin per grams of carbohydrate, like 1:15 or 1:20. An I:C ratio of 1:15 means you need 1 unit of rapid-acting insulin for every 15 grams of carb you eat.

Your diabetes care team will help you figure out your insulin-to-carb ratio.

They'll usually ask you to record the following for about 2 weeks:

All your insulin doses

The food you eat with the amount of carb in each meal and snack

And all blood sugar readings

You may be asked to check your blood sugar more often during this time.

Your diabetes care team will use this information to see how your body reacts to food and insulin at different times of the day.

From this, they can figure out your insulin-to-carb ratio. This ratio is different for everyone. And it may change depending on the time of day or amount of activity you do.

You will use your insulin-to-carb ratio to figure out how much bolus insulin you need to take to cover the amount of carb in the meal or snack you are about to eat.

Here's an example. Your diabetes care team may determine your midday I:C ratio is 1:15. When you are ready to eat lunch, check your blood sugar.

It is within your before meal target range.

Now count the carbs in the meal you are about to eat.

This lunch has 62 grams of carbs.

Next, use your I:C ratio to figure out how much insulin to take. To do this, divide the total number of carbs in your meal by your I:C ratio.

62 divided by 15 equals 4.1.

You will need to take 4.1 units of insulin before your meal to maintain a healthy blood sugar level after you eat.

If you are injecting your insulin, you can round down to 4 units.

If using a pump, you may be able to program your pump for the exact amount of insulin you need.

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Remember, this is just an example. When you are calculating the correct amount of insulin to take at each meal or snack, your insulin-to-carb ratio is just one of the tools you'll use to determine the correct dose.

Meet with your diabetes care team on a regular basis to review your insulin-to-carb ratio and blood sugar results. You may need to make changes to find the ratio that works best for you.