

Diabetes: Carbohydrate Counting

Carbohydrates can raise your blood sugar more than protein or fat. Your blood sugar can go too high when you eat more carbohydrates than your body can use. Carbohydrates are contained in foods such as bread, pasta, bagels, cereal, milk, fruit and fruit juices, and sweets. Keeping track of how much carbohydrate you eat is important in controlling your blood sugar, especially for people with type 1 diabetes or for people taking 3 or more insulin injections per day.

Carbohydrate counting is a way to plan meals and snacks throughout the day to manage your diabetes. By keeping track of your carbohydrates and spreading them throughout the day, you can help control your blood sugar.

HOW MANY CARBOHYDRATES YOU SHOULD EAT

It's important to watch the size of your carbohydrate portions to assist with healthy eating.

- A dietitian will be able to help you come up with a plan that includes your favorite foods
- Until you see a dietitian, you should try to eat about the same number of carbohydrates (carbs) at each meal. You can look at labels on packaged

foods to get an idea of how many carbs are in your favorite foods. Examples of the lower range of carbs are listed.

- **Breakfast:** 30-45 grams of carb: 1 cup Cheerios and 1 cup of skim milk
- **Lunch:** 45-60 grams of carb: 2 slices of wheat bread and one large apple
- **Dinner:** 45-60 grams of carb: 1 cup of rice or 1 cup of cooked pasta with ½ cup of marinara sauce
- **Snack:** 15-30 grams of carb: 1 cup of fresh pear

CARBOHYDRATE CHOICES=15 GRAMS OF CARBOHYDRATE

An older method of carb counting that is sometimes listed on packages is carbohydrate choices.



Starches

- 1 slice bread or small roll
- ¾ cup cereal
- ½ small grocery store frozen 2 oz bagel
- ½ cup cooked rice or pasta
- ½ cup corn, peas, beans



Fruit

- 1 small fruit or 1 cup berries
- 12-15 grapes or cherries
- ⅓ - ½ cup fruit juice



Milk/Yogurt

- 1 cup fat-free or low-fat milk
- ¾ cup light yogurt



Sweets

- 2 small cookies
- ½ cup ice cream/frozen yogurt



STEPS TO BETTER HEALTH

- Eat carbohydrates with higher fiber like whole grain breads and pastas and/or brown rice
- Reduce the amount of food you eat to help you lose weight
- Carb Counting Apps – Figwee Portion Explorer, Calorie King, Lose it