

Food for Thought

Key Takeaways from ADA's Nutrition Consensus Report

Your health care team knows you best, and our new nutrition consensus report gives them recommendations based on the latest research. Here are some highlights:



There is no “diabetes diet.” Really. Talk to your doctor and get a referral to a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) who can help you figure out what eating plan makes the most sense for you and your treatment goals.



You have choices—lots. Many different eating patterns can help you manage your diabetes—from Mediterranean to low-carbohydrate to vegetarian. Whatever you choose, be sure to include lots of non-starchy vegetables, minimize added sugars and refined grains, and choose whole, minimally processed foods.



Macronutrients may vary. We wish we could tell you the perfect percentage of calories from carbs, protein, and fat that you need, but the truth is the percentages can and should be individualized.



Carbs are not one-size-fits-all. While there is growing evidence to show that low-carbohydrate eating patterns can benefit people with diabetes and prediabetes, there is no one definition for “low carb.” For some, following an eating pattern lower in carbs (26–45% of total calories from carbohydrate) showed better blood sugars and a reduction in diabetes medications, among other benefits. Work closely with your doctor and RDN if you choose a lower carb approach to minimize risks (such as hypoglycemia) and maximize success.



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Weight loss works. Losing modest amounts of weight (start with 5%) can improve your blood sugars and other diabetes outcomes in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. There are lots of ways to lose weight, from changing your diet to getting more exercise, taking medications or even surgery. A focus on lifestyle changes is the preferred starting point, but it's important to be familiar with all valid options.



Tweaking your food choices can help reduce risk factors for complications.

Food swaps are easy ways for people with diabetes to reduce their risk for cardiovascular disease and kidney disease. For example, consider replacing foods high in saturated fat, such as butter and fatty beef, with foods rich in unsaturated fats, like olive oil and fish.



We're here to help!

Learn more and find resources at diabetes.org/nutrition.