

My Diabetic Meal Plan during Pregnancy



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When you have diabetes and are pregnant, you need to eat small meals and snacks throughout the day to help control your blood sugar. This also helps you get in enough nutrients for a healthy pregnancy.

Calories come from carbohydrate, protein or fat. Carbohydrates have the largest and quickest effect on blood sugar. High carbohydrate food groups include:

- Starch, which includes whole grain foods and starchy vegetables
- Milk and yogurt
- Fruit

By following a carbohydrate controlled diet, you can control your blood sugar better. **This is important for you and your baby.**

The plan

- **Your meal plan will have 3 meals and 3 snacks a day.** The goal is to keep your blood sugar at a healthy level all day long. Do not skip meals.
- **Each meal and snack should have at least one serving of carbohydrate** from the Starch, Fruit or Milk Groups **and one serving of protein** from the Meat / Meat Substitute Group.
 - **The amount of carbohydrate you need is based on your height, weight, activity level, blood sugar control and pregnancy.** Your dietitian or nurse will tell you the amount of carbohydrate you need in your diet.
- You will want to eat your meals and snacks at about the same times each day. This will help to keep your blood sugar controlled for your health and the growth of your baby.

Carbohydrate counting

Carbohydrate counting, also called carb counting, is a meal planning tool for people with diabetes. Carb counting involves using food labels and estimating portion sizes of foods to keep track of the amount of carbohydrates you eat each day.

Carbohydrates are one of the main nutrients found in food and drinks. Protein and fat are the other main nutrients. Carbohydrates include starches, sugars and fiber. Carb counting can help to control your blood sugar because carbohydrates affect your blood sugar more than other nutrients.

How to count carbohydrates

When reading food labels, use these 4 tips to help you count carbohydrates:

- 1. Check the serving size.** All nutritional information on the label is based on one serving. Be sure to look at the common measure, such as cups or tablespoons. The grams (g) listed are the weight of the serving.

The serving size for the sample product on the next page is 1 cup (228 g).

- 2. Look for total carbohydrates in grams.** This includes the fiber, sugars and other carbohydrates in the food. Use this number when counting carbohydrates. **Do not look at sugars alone. You need to consider total carbohydrates in a product.**

There are 31 grams of carbohydrate in this product per serving. If you ate 2 servings of this food, you would be getting 62 grams of carbohydrate.

- 3. Understand the sugar alcohol rule.** Sugar alcohols, like fiber, are another form of carbohydrate on product labels. Sugar alcohol is not an alcoholic drink. It refers to a specific group of sugars that come from plants and have names, such as xylitol, mannitol or sorbitol. They are in food and drinks because they have fewer calories and do not cause spikes in blood sugar.

The sugar alcohol rule: if eating a food with sugar alcohols, you can subtract half of the total grams of sugar alcohols listed from the total grams of carbohydrates.

This sample product label shows there are no sugar alcohols in it.

- 4. Compare labels.** First compare the serving sizes of products you eat. Then compare the grams of total carbohydrate. Look at the fiber and sugar content. For some products, like cookies or candy, you will find that sugar-free does not mean carbohydrate-free.

Carbohydrate serving sizes

If you have a food exchange book or list, you can use it to look up grams of carbohydrate for foods. Otherwise, read the product's food label. If no food label is available, use the estimates on the next pages to calculate the carbohydrate grams for a food. Be aware that carbohydrate amounts can vary greatly between different types of the same food. For example, some breads are 15 grams a slice while others are closer to 25 grams.

Starch Group – 1 serving equals 15 grams of carbohydrate or 1 carb choice

Choose whole grains over refined grains. 1 serving equals:

- 1 (1 ounce) slice of bread
- 1 (1 ounce) small roll

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 1.5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

- ¼ (1 ounce) bagel
- ½ hamburger bun or English muffin
- 1, 6-inch tortilla
- ⅓ cup cooked rice, pasta, barley, quinoa or couscous
- ½ cup cooked bulgur wheat, lentils or legumes (dried beans or peas)
- ½ cup corn, sweet potato or green peas
- 3 ounce baked sweet or white potato with skin
- ½ cup cooked cereal
- ¾ cup unsweetened dry cereal
- ¾ ounce pretzels
- 3 cups hot air popped or microwave popcorn with no more than 3 grams of fat per serving

Fruit Group – 1 serving equals 15 grams of carbohydrate or 1 carb choice

Pregnant women should eat fruit every day. 1 serving equals:

- 1 small apple, orange or nectarine
- ½ cup fresh grapes
- 1 medium peach
- 1 kiwi
- ½ banana, grapefruit, mango or pear
- 1 cup fresh melon, raspberries or strawberries
- ¾ cup fresh pineapple, blueberries or blackberries
- ½ cup canned fruit in juice or light syrup
- ½ cup (4 ounces) fruit juice with no sugar added
- 2 tablespoons dried fruit

Milk Group – 1 serving equals 15 grams of carbohydrate or 1 carb choice

Pregnant women should drink milk or eat yogurt every day. 1 serving equals:

- 1 cup (8 ounces) fat-free or low-fat milk
- 1 cup (8 ounces) plain yogurt
- 6 ounces light yogurt

Sweets

Limit the amount of sweets you eat. They are high in carbohydrates and often high in calories and fat. This includes limiting the amount of cake, ice cream, pie, syrup, cookies, candies and doughnuts you eat. Do not add table sugar, honey or other sweeteners to your foods or beverages. Limiting sweets will help to keep your blood sugar under control.

Foods that have little effect on blood sugar

Non-Starchy Vegetable Group - 1 serving equals 5 grams of carbohydrate

Examples include:

- Artichoke
- Asparagus
- Bean sprouts
- Beets
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Cucumber
- Green or yellow beans
- Salad greens
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Peppers
- Radish
- Snow peas
- Sugar snap peas
- Tomatoes
- Turnips
- Yellow squash
- Zucchini

You may eat an unlimited amount of foods from this group. 1 serving equals:

- 1 cup raw vegetables or salad greens
- ½ cup cooked vegetables
- ½ cup vegetable juice

Meat / Meat Substitutes Group

Avoid meats that are high in saturated fat, such as bacon and sausage. 1 serving equals:

- 1 egg, 2 egg whites or ¼ cup egg substitute
- 1 ounce turkey breast or chicken breast, skin removed
- 1 ounce fish fillet
- 1 ounce canned tuna in water
- 1 ounce shellfish
- 1 ounce lean beef, lamb or pork (limit to 1 to 2 times per week)
- 1 ounce of cheese (limit cheese to 1 to 2 ounces per day)
- ¼ cup nonfat or low-fat cottage cheese
- 1 ounce lean lunch meat (with 3 grams or less of fat per ounce)
- ½ cup cooked beans (black beans, kidney, chickpeas or lentils): count as 1 serving of starch and 1 serving of meat
- 4 ounces tofu
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons seeds
- 1 ounce nuts

Fats

Limit fried foods in your diet. Try to bake or broil your foods more often.

Moderate fat intake during pregnancy is ideal. Do not follow a very low fat diet. If you have questions about the fat in your diet, talk to your dietitian or nurse.

1 serving or 5 grams of fat equals:

- 1 teaspoon oil (vegetable, corn, canola, olive, etc.)
- 1 teaspoon butter or margarine
- 1 teaspoon mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon salad dressing
- 1 tablespoon cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons avocado
- 8 to 10 large olives
- 1 slice bacon

My meal plan

Your goal for carbohydrate is based on your calorie needs during pregnancy. Your dietitian or nurse will let you know how many calories you should eat each day. 35 to 40 percent of your calories will come from carbohydrate.

Calorie level	Carbs in grams
1,700	170 to 190
1,900	175 to 190
2,100	185 to 210
2,300	200 to 230
2,500	220 to 250
2,700	235 to 270

It is important to spread your carbs out throughout the day rather than eating a large amount at one time. **Limit carbs to 30 to 60 grams at meals and 15 to 30 grams for snacks.** The following table gives examples of how to spread out your carbs.

Calorie level	Breakfast	Morning snack	Lunch	Afternoon snack	Dinner	Evening snack	Total carbs in grams
1,700	30	15	45	30	45	15	180
1,900	30	15	45	30	45	15	180
2,100	45	15	45	30	45	15	195
2,300	45	15	45	30	60	15	210
2,500	45	30	60	30	60	15	240
2,700	45	30	60	30	60	30	255

For a well-balanced diet, aim for the following servings per food group each day. Choose Meat / Meat Substitutes that are lean or medium-fat with 5 grams or less of fat per ounce.

Calorie level	Starch	Fruit	Milk	Vegetables, Non-Starchy	Meat / Meat Substitutes	Fat
1,700	6	2	2 to 3	5	7 to 8	6
1,900	6	2 to 3	2 to 3	5	9	7
2,100	7	2 to 3	2 to 3	5	10	8
2,300	8	2 to 3	2 to 3	6	11	9
2,500	9	3 to 4	2 to 3	6	12	9
2,700	10	3 to 4	2 to 3	6	13	10

Use your recommended total carbs and servings per food group to create a sample meal plan on the next page. You do not need to eat a serving from each food group at every meal or snack. We do recommend eating **at least one serving of carbohydrate** from the Starch, Fruit or Milk Groups **and one serving of protein** from the Meat / Meat Substitute Group with each meal and snack to help control your blood sugar.

Share your meal plan with your dietitian or nurse and ask questions if you need help creating a meal plan.

My sample meal plan

Meal or Snack	Food Group	Number of Servings	Total grams of carb	Menu Ideas
Breakfast	Starch			
	Milk			
	Meat / Meat Substitutes			
	Fat			
Morning snack	Starch			
	Fruit			
	Milk			
	Vegetables, Non-Starchy			
	Meat / Meat Substitutes			
	Fat			
Lunch	Starch			
	Fruit			
	Milk			
	Vegetables, Non-Starchy			
	Meat / Meat Substitutes			
	Fat			
Afternoon snack	Starch			
	Fruit			
	Milk			
	Vegetables, Non-Starchy			
	Meat / Meat Substitutes			
	Fat			
Dinner	Starch			
	Fruit			
	Milk			
	Vegetables, Non-Starchy			
	Meat / Meat Substitutes			
	Fat			
Evening snack	Starch			
	Fruit			
	Milk			
	Vegetables, Non-Starchy			
	Meat / Meat Substitutes			
	Fat			
My sample meal plan has _____ total grams of carb.				