

# Eating With Type 2 Diabetes

If you have type 2 diabetes, losing 5–10% of your body weight can help improve your blood glucose. Eating less food and getting more exercise can help you lose weight.

You can also improve your blood glucose if you know how the foods you eat affect your blood glucose level. Testing your blood glucose right before you eat and again 2 hours after you eat will help you make wiser food choices. The American Diabetes Association sets a blood glucose target of < 180 mg/dl 2 hours after a meal. If your blood glucose at that time is > 180 mg/dl, making changes in what you eat could help you reach that target.

Eating more carbohydrate foods, such as starches, fruits, sweets, and sugary drinks, than your body can handle can make your blood glucose level rise. Some carbohydrates, such as regular sodas, sweet tea, desserts, and chips, are empty-calorie foods. They raise your blood glucose level and do not give you much nutrition. Fruit juices can also raise your blood glucose level. Drinking them in smaller servings could help keep your blood glucose from going too high. Carbohydrate foods are important and

provide you with energy, so don't stop eating all carbohydrates! Most people need at least nine carbohydrate servings each day. Some carbohydrate foods, such as whole-grain breads, cereals, and crackers, improve your overall nutrition in other ways, too.

## What to Eat

A good first step is to ask your health care provider to refer you to a registered dietitian (RD). However, you can make some changes in your eating even before you see an RD. Use the picture below to help you decide how much and what kinds of foods to eat (Figure 1).

1. Fill half of your plate with nonstarchy vegetables. A list of nonstarchy vegetables is shown in Table 1.
2. Your portion of lean meat, such as skinless baked chicken or baked or grilled fish, should fit in one-fourth of your plate.
3. Your servings of carbohydrate foods, such as potatoes, rice, pasta, bread, or starchy vegetables, should fit in the last one-fourth of your plate. Try to only eat 1 cup total of any combination of the starchy foods in your

meal. A list of carbohydrate foods is shown in Table 2.

4. Add a cup of skim or low-fat milk, a small serving of fresh fruit or one-half cup of canned fruit, or a roll or slice of bread.
5. See an RD for help in developing a personal meal plan that will fit your usual way of eating.

**Table 1. Nonstarchy Vegetables**

Fill half your plate with these.

Artichokes	Leafs
Asparagus	Lettuce (all kinds)
Avocados	Mushrooms
Beets	Okra
Broccoli	Onions
Brussels sprouts	Peppers
Cabbage	Spinach
Carrots	Sprouts
Cauliflower	Tomatillos
Celery	Tomatoes
Cucumbers	Turnips
Eggplant	Yellow squash
Green beans	Zucchini
Greens	

**Table 2. Carbohydrate Foods**

Put no more than 1 cup of these on your plate.

Acorn squash	Dumplings
Beans (such as white beans or pinto beans)	Hubbard squash
Biscuits	Lima beans
Breads	Pasta
Butternut squash	Potatoes
Cereals	Rice
Crackers	Tortillas

## Lunch or Dinner Plate

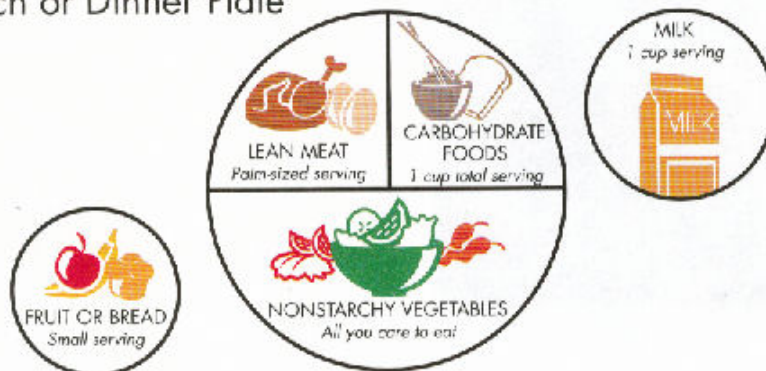


Figure 1. The plate method