

Eat
Well

Feel
Well

A How-To-Handbook
For People with Diabetes

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OVERVIEW

Millions of Americans have learned to live well with diabetes. You can learn how, too.

What Is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a disorder in the way your body uses blood glucose -- or blood sugar -- the basic source of energy that keeps you going.

Glucose is made from foods you've eaten. It travels in the bloodstream, circulating throughout your body. When the cells that make up your body tissues need glucose, they absorb it with the help of a special system: insulin and insulin receptors. Insulin from the bloodstream binds to special sites called receptors on cell walls. This opens channels so glucose can pass into the cells.

Diabetes can't
be cured, but
it can be
controlled

Type II Diabetes

People with Type II diabetes either don't produce enough insulin, or have a problem with the use of insulin. Their bodies do produce insulin -- sometimes more insulin than is normal -- but because of insulin resistance their cells may not be able to use it properly. Thus, glucose stays in the blood, rather than passing into the cells where it is needed.

Type II diabetes develops in adults, most often in people who have family members with diabetes and who are inactive and overweight.

Controlling Diabetes

Controlling diabetes means trying to keep your blood glucose levels as normal as you can. Long periods of high blood glucose levels -- or hyperglycemia -- can have serious consequences involving damage to the eyes, kidneys, nerves, blood vessels, and other parts of the body. So controlling diabetes is a goal worth working toward. Nutritious foods, good eating habits, regular exercise, and, if necessary, medication are the keys to control.

Eating to Keep Your Blood Glucose in Balance

Large meals, especially those high in fat and carbohydrates, raise blood glucose levels. Glucose builds up in the bloodstream but can't enter the cells that need it. As a result, you feel tired and thirsty, your vision may blur, and you may urinate frequently. Cuts or sores can take a long time to heal. Other serious damage may take place in other parts of your body. You can prevent this!

Keys to control:

- Regular meals
- Nutritious low-fat foods
- Exercise
- Medication

Eating to Keep Your Risk of Heart Disease Low

A diet high in fat, especially saturated fats, raises blood fats -- especially LDL cholesterol (the "bad" kind) and fats called triglycerides, which can contribute to heart disease. This is important to know because your risk of heart attack, stroke, and high blood pressure may already be high if you have diabetes.

Diet Alone is Not Enough

Getting yourself moving again is a vital part of diabetes control. Regular exercise and sensible eating work together. For many people with diabetes, sensible eating work together. For many people with diabetes, sensible eating habits and regular physical activity are the only treatments needed. However, sometimes medication is needed to control your blood glucose. But even for those taking medication, sensible eating habits and regular exercise may lead to a reduction or discontinuation of the medication.

Keeping Track of Your Therapy

The methods of controlling diabetes can work -- but diabetes can be unpredictable. The best way to track the effectiveness of your therapy is to check your blood glucose level. You'll learn how to do this yourself, with a simple test using a drop of blood from your finger.

Your healthcare professional will practice the test with you until you feel comfortable enough to do it yourself. It will become routine. It is important to write down the test results so that you and your healthcare team can determine how well your therapy is working.

Professional Care Puts You in Control

Many hospitals and clinics use a team approach in caring for people with diabetes. Several specialists may be involved in your care. As the patient, you are the most important team member.

A dietitian may work with you and your doctor to set goals for your daily diet, which may include monitoring carbohydrate, fat, and total calorie intake. You'll get help with food choices, serving sizes, and meal planning.

If Blood Glucose Is Too Low (Hypoglycemia)

If you skip a meal or snack, do unexpected exercise, or take too much medication, your blood glucose level may drop too far and you will begin to feel ill. This is called hypoglycemia.

Symptoms: Shaking, sweating, anxiety, hunger, dizziness, pallor, headache, numb or tingling lips.

If this happens, immediately drink a small glass of fruit juice or a half cup of regular soda. Or eat a fresh orange or five hard candies.

Don't forget to tell your doctor what happened.

IF YOU'VE JUST FOUND OUT YOU HAVE DIABETES

Remind yourself that you're not alone. Your healthcare team will help you learn how to keep your blood glucose under control.

"Why Me?"

Diabetes is a common disease. Genes you inherited from your parents and grandparents played a part. In addition, some things you've been doing may have increased your risk, but these can be corrected with proper nutrition, exercise, and medication.

"What Do I Do Now?"

Remember, more than 8 million other Americans have diagnosed diabetes, and like many of them you can live a healthy, active life. So here is what you need to know...

It's Okay to Eat...

Here are some general guidelines. A nutrition counselor can give you individualized advice.

BREAKFAST

Fresh fruit or fruit juice. Hot or cold cereal. Toast with margarine. Milk. Coffee or tea (use a sugar substitute).

MID-MORNING SNACK

Fresh fruit, or three or four crackers. Diet soda.

LUNCH

Sandwich with meat, poultry, fish, or low-fat cheese, with small amount of margarine or mayonnaise. Raw vegetables or salad. Fresh fruit. Milk.

AFTERNOON SNACK

Small bowl of cereal or small sandwich. Fruit or crackers.

DINNER

Small serving of meat, poultry, or fish. Serving of potatoes, rice, or noodles. Bread or rolls with margarine. Cooked vegetables. Raw vegetables or salad, if desired. Fruit. Milk

BEDTIME SNACK

Milk or fruit. Three to four crackers.

“Can I Eat Normal Food?”

Yes. Tonight, eat the meal you planned before you received this information with two changes:

- No second helpings
- Eat a fresh fruit for dessert

“Will I Have to Diet?”

You will have to watch what you eat and the way you eat.

- More of some foods, less of others
- More regular but smaller meals
- Well-planned snacks

“What Changes Should I Make?”

To control your blood glucose and maintain good health, you'll have to work on a couple of things. Small, gradual changes add up to better control. To start, cut down on these:

- Fat
- Calories
- Salt

Eat more of these:

- Fresh vegetables, fruits, and whole grains
- Nonfat dairy products
- Broiled, baked, or steamed foods

Many of your favorite main dishes and desserts can be changed enough to meet your new needs

“Should I Eat Dietetic Foods?”

You may find that some are helpful and appetizing, especially low-sugar jams, jellies, and syrups. But dietetic doesn't mean diabetic. Be sure to check the labels for carbohydrate, fat, and calorie content.

And look at other foods as well! Nearly everyone is more conscious of food content these days. Many food markets -- and restaurants -- now feature foods that fit your needs.

“Do I Have to Give Up Sugar?”

No. But eat far less of it. Foods containing large amounts of sugar can throw your blood glucose out of balance if you are not careful.

- Choose diet soft drinks instead of regular ones
- Choose low-sugar or light jams, jellies, and syrups.
- Choose a sugar substitute to sweeten your hot beverages

“I’m Used to Ethnic Food. What Do I Do?”

Many ethnic foods are fine! Others can be changed so that they contain less fat and fewer calories. See substitutes list on page 23, and “Recipe Make-Overs” on page 24.

“Should My Family Eat What I Eat?”

Yes! The changes you make to control your diabetes are good for your whole family. Make your changes the easy way. You can all enjoy the same meals.

Everyone can cut the risk of cancer, stroke, and heart disease by eating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nonfat dairy products, and by cutting down on fat, salt, and total calories.

Your whole family can benefit from the dietary changes you will make.

These changes are supported by the American Heart Association, the National Cancer Institute, the American Diabetes Association, the National Cholesterol Education Program -- and your diabetes healthcare team.

“Can I Eat in a Restaurant?”

Of course, but choose carefully. And don’t be shy about asking for substitutions. Some good choices are:

- For entrées, broiled or baked meat, fish, or chicken (take the skin off the chicken); bean dishes
- On the side, rice, barley, pasta, bread (with soft diet margarine)
- Vegetables without sauce
- Salads (ask for dressing on the side)

- Extras such as tomato sauce, nonfat cottage cheese, grated Parmesan
- For dessert, fresh fruit, sherbet, frozen low-fat yogurt, angel food cake

When in doubt, eat only part of a serving.

“What About Fast Foods?”

Even the fast-food chains have heard the message of cutting back on fat and calories. Choose carefully. Avoid sauces, salad dressings, milk shakes, cheese toppings, fried potatoes, sausage, and egg dishes.

“Will It Be Hard for Me to Travel?”

No. But meal-planning must be part of travel-planning. Be prepared for travel delays, time changes, and the extra activity.

- Carry or wear medical identification
- Take along a carry-kit with your medical and testing supplies (Don’t pack it in your luggage)
- Carry starch or fruit snacks, in case your meals are delayed
- Tell your doctor about your plans
- Ask your airline about special low-fat meals

“Am I Supposed to Measure Everything I Eat?”

Yes and no. Think of measuring as using a map in an unfamiliar neighborhood. As you grow comfortable with your new requirements, you’ll need to measure less and less.

- Measuring puts you in control of the size of your helpings
- Food exchanges (explained on page 19) help you balance choices from different food groups and plan interesting meals
- Watching carbohydrates, fat, and calories, guides you toward your goals

“I Haven’t Got Time to Fuss with Cooking. Can I Use Convenience Foods?”

Yes, but you will need to learn which ones fit your needs.

SO, WHAT'S TO EAT?

The smart choices of what to eat are similar for everyone.

You Don't Have to Give Up the Foods You Like

Eating a balanced diet is one important tool to help control diabetes. Smart food choices can help keep your blood glucose level in check. Poor food choices can work against your efforts to stay healthy. The good news is that the diet recommended for people with diabetes is similar to the diet recommended for all healthy people. You should focus on eating a varied diet with less fat, fewer sugary foods, and consistent carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, and grains). The main difference is that people with diabetes need to be more aware of when and how much they eat, especially if they take medication to lower blood glucose. Overall, the smart choices of what to eat are similar for everyone. A registered dietitian can help you by developing a meal plan to match your personal tastes and lifestyle.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The federal government in its 1995 revised Dietary Guidelines for Americans offers good advice for all who wish to improve their health through better nutrition. The seven recommendations that follow apply to people with diabetes as well.

1. EAT A VARIETY OF FOODS

When you choose a wide variety of foods from all of the food groups each day, you can get all the essential vitamins and other nutrients your body needs. Each day include starches (such as whole-grain breads, cereals, and crackers), protein (such as lean meat, chicken, and fish), fruits, vegetables, dairy products (such as low-fat and skim milk), and fats (such as unsaturated cooking oil and margarine). Variety not only makes meals more healthful, but more interesting and enjoyable, too.

2. BALANCE THE FOOD YOU EAT WITH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. MAINTAIN OR REDUCE YOUR WEIGHT

If you are at or near your desirable weight, great! Try to stay there. If, like most people with Type II diabetes, you are somewhat overweight, any amount of weight loss -- even a few pounds -- will help control your diabetes better by helping your body use insulin. Losing excess weight is one of the best things you can do for your health. It can make you look and feel better, and you may be able to reduce the dosage of your diabetes medication. The key to staying lean and healthy is to balance the calories you take in from food with the calories you burn during physical activity.

If Weight Loss Is Your Goal

- Reduce caloric intake by eating low-calorie/low-fat foods, such as grain products, vegetables, and fruits; eat smaller portions; and limit or skip second helpings
- Increase the number of calories burned by including regular, moderate physical activity (aim for at least 30 minutes most days), such as walking, calisthenics, cycling, swimming, dancing, or gardening; exercise burns calories, makes weight loss easier, and helps lower your blood glucose level
- A registered dietitian or diabetes educator can work with you to help you achieve your short-term and long-term weight loss goals. Before beginning any exercise program consult your physician.

3. CHOOSE A DIET LOW IN FAT, SATURATED FAT, AND CHOLESTEROL

Research shows that a diet low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol can help reduce the risk of developing heart disease, obesity, and certain kinds of cancer. To cut back on fat, make small gradual changes you can live with. Start by choosing foods in the same food category with less fat. For instance, don't give up milk because of the fat content. Instead drink 2%, low-fat, or skim milk. Other fat-fighting tips:

- Choose lean cuts of meat, remove the skin from poultry
- Bake, broil, poach, or steam your food rather than frying it
- Use low-fat or nonfat spreads and salad dressings
- Check the Nutrition Facts panel on food packages for fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol contents before you buy

4. CHOOSE A DIET WITH PLENTY OF GRAIN PRODUCTS, VEGETABLES, AND FRUITS

Grain-based foods, vegetables, and fruits should form the foundation of your diet. In general, these foods are typically low in fat and provide substantial amounts of essential nutrients. Think of your plate as a pie chart. Seventy-five percent of the pie should be made up of fruits, vegetables, and grains; 25% of other foods, such as protein foods or dairy products. Try to get many of your calories each day from breads, crackers, cereals, pasta, grains (rice, barley, oats, bulgur, etc.), dry beans, lentils, vegetables, and fruits.

5. CHOOSE A DIET MODERATE IN SUGARS

In the past, sugars such as candy and regular soda and sweets like cakes and cookies were banned for people with diabetes. Based on new research, the old rules for avoiding sugar have been relaxed. Now sugars and sweets aren't off limits. However, you must carefully fit them into your meal plan when you choose to eat them. The best plan is to eat sugars and sweets in moderation, the same advice recommended for all healthy people. Overall, eating moderate amounts of sugar is okay when your total diet is taken into consideration. Eating too many sweets is not desirable, because these foods often contain lots of carbohydrates, fat, and calories but few nutrients. Foods prepared with artificial sweeteners can give you the sweet flavor of sugar without the calories of high-sugar foods.

6. CHOOSE A DIET MODERATE IN SALT AND SODIUM

Diabetes can be associated with high blood pressure. Although there is no sure way to predict who will benefit from reducing

dietary salt and sodium, many nutrition experts believe it is wise for most people to eat less.

If you do have high blood pressure, the condition can be made worse by eating too much sodium (salt and salty foods). Try to use less salt in cooking and at the table. Also, since salt (sodium chloride) and other sodium-containing substances are added to many foods during processing, it's important to refer to the nutrition facts label on food packages for the amount of sodium in the specific brands of foods you eat

7. IF YOU DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, DO SO IN MODERATION

Alcoholic beverages supply calories but little or no nutrients. Those who choose to drink are advised to use discretion. People with diabetes may enjoy an alcoholic drink occasionally. However, if you take diabetes medication, be sure to eat food when you drink. Check with your doctor or ask your dietitian about the amount of alcohol appropriate for you and how to work it into your meal plan.

Putting It All Together

The American Diabetes Association and the American Dietetic Association developed the food exchange system to help create balanced, healthful meals. This is the easiest way to plan meals. There are three major food groups that are of similar calorie and nutrient content. A food in any group may be exchanged (or traded) for another in the same group. This system eliminates the need to count calories and offers a wide variety of foods to choose from. The three groups are:

Food exchanges make meal planning easy.

- Carbohydrates such as starch, fruit, milk, simple desserts, and vegetables
- Meat and meat substitutes
- Fat

A registered dietitian or diabetes educator can help you learn how to use the exchange system to make meal planning convenient and easy.

START NOW!

Plan to make some changes gradually. But there are a few changes you need to make right now! Here's how to get your kitchen ready for your new life.

Get Ready

Get your kitchen ready for low-fat cooking.

You may want to buy these items if you don't have them:

Heavy-duty nonstick frying pan

Plastic or rubber spoons and spatula (to protect nonstick surfaces)

Vegetable steamer with cover

Set of measuring cups (long handles are helpful)

Broiling pan with removable rack

Cookie sheet for oven frying

Soon you will want:

Nonstick saucepans in several sizes

Colander (for draining pasta)

Salad spinner (for rinsing fresh salad greens)

High-speed blender (for nonfat yogurt milk shakes)

And you may think about:

Air popper (for fat-free popcorn)

Set of dinnerware with 9-inch plates

Smaller dessert bowls

Microwave oven

Food processor

Get Set

There is no point in tracking intake of saturated fat, or calories, or anything, if you don't know how much you're eating.

Nutrition labels and diet cookbooks often measure ingredients in grams. To clarify, 1 ounce equals 28.4 grams, so a food serving of 100 grams is not quite 4 ounces.

MEASURING BY ROLE OF THUMB

Cup (8 ounces)

Teaspoon
Tablespoon (equals
3 teaspoons)

Serving Spoon
(size varies!)

STANDARD PORTIONS

Meat, chicken, or fish

=3 ounce
serving

= Piece about the
size of a deck
of playing cards

STANDARD PORTIONS

For these, check the size of your serving spoon (use raw rice) to see how many spoonfuls make the standard portion.

Fruit, vegetables,
side dishes, salads

= 1/2 cup

= ___ your
serving spoonfuls

Main dish casserole,
pasta, or beans

= 1 cup

= ___ your
serving spoons

1 scoop of frozen yogurt,
sherbet, light ice cream

= 1/3 cup

= ___ your
serving spoonfuls

Now Go on a Fat-Finding Tour

The easiest way to lose fat and calories is to make simple substitutions. Stock your refrigerator and cupboards with the “good” substitute products.

| INSTEAD OF: | SUBSTITUTE WITH: |
|--|---|
| Butter | Soft diet margarine: choose brand with lowest saturated fat number (It can be as low as 1 gram per tablespoon.) Butter-flavored powder |
| Lard, canned shortening, regular cooking oil | Cooking oil with the lowest saturated fat number Vegetable oil spray Olive oil or canola oil |
| Doughnuts, Pop Tarts, sticky buns, Danish pastry | Bagels, English muffins, whole wheat raisin bread |
| Filled cookies, chocolate chip or coated cookies | Gingersnaps, fig bars, vanilla wafers |
| Regular mayonnaise | Nonfat diet mayonnaise |
| Whole milk, condensed milk, evaporated milk | Skim or 1% milk (Make the switch to 1% milk for table use slowly.) Nonfat evaporated milk, nonfat dry milk powder |
| Regular yogurt, yogurt with fruit preserves | Nonfat yogurt, artificially sweetened fruited yogurt |
| Maple syrup, corn syrup, fruit-flavored syrup | Flavored sugar-free syrup |
| Ice cream | Frozen yogurt, sorbet, frozen diet desserts |
| Baking chocolate, chocolate syrup | Cocoa powder |

RECIPE MAKE-OVERS

A few simple substitutions will go a long way toward cutting the fat and calories out of your favorite dishes.

Redo Your Favorite Recipes

Check your favorite recipes. Do ingredients include cream, lard, butter, sour cream, sugar, salt, or ready-made sauces? Do they call for breading or deep frying? If so, try these.

Instead of whole eggs in pancakes, waffles, French toast -- or any recipe calling for a beaten egg, use:

The No-Fat Egg

6 egg whites
1/4 cup nonfat dry milk powder
1 tablespoon preferred vegetable oil

Combine ingredients in a mixing bowl. Stir with a fork or whisk until smooth. Keep in a closed container. Use 1/4 cup for 1 whole egg. This freezes well or keeps for a week unfrozen in the refrigerator.

Instead of breading and frying chicken, shrimp, fish, or chops, try:

Oven Frying

Line baking sheet with foil and coat it with oil spray. Brush or dip trimmed chops, fish, skinned chicken pieces, or shelled raw shrimp in either egg substitute or the No-Fat Egg. Roll in (choose one):

1/3 cup cornflakes, crushed with rolling pin or
1/3 cup oat bran or
1/3 cup wheat germ

Place on baking sheet, leaving space between pieces. Cook without turning. Bake fish or shrimp at 500 degrees for 10 minutes. Bake chicken or chops at 400 degrees for 45 minutes.

Instead of cream, mayonnaise, or sour cream, use:

New Cream

1/2 cup plain, nonfat yogurt
1/2 cup nonfat cottage cheese
1 teaspoon lemon juice

Mix in a food processor or blender or beat with an electric eggbeater until smooth. Refrigerate in a covered container.

- Add chopped chives and dollop on a baked potato
- Add another teaspoon of lemon juice and use to replace mayonnaise in tuna fish or Waldorf salads
- Add sugar substitute to taste and use as topping for waffles or fresh fruit

Instead of canned gravy, canned soups, pan drippings, or cream sauce, try:

Four-Minute Basic Gravy

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 tablespoons white flour
1 cup nonfat milk
1.2 teaspoon onion powder

Blend oil and flour in a nonstick saucepan. Using a rubber spatula, slowly stir in cold milk. Mix until smooth. Add onion powder. Cook over medium heat, stirring until it thickens. Cooking time is about 3 minutes.

- For meat sauce, add ready-made, brown-gravy concentrate and pepper
- For fish, add capers, dill, pepper, and a dash of lemon
- For mushroom sauce, add sliced, canned mushrooms and garlic powder

Instead of cream soup for sauces or casseroles, use:

Cream Soup Powder

2 cups instant nonfat dry milk powder
3/4 cup cornstarch
1/4 cup instant, low-sodium chicken bouillon
2 tablespoons dried onion flakes
1 teaspoon dried crushed basil
1 teaspoon dried crushed thyme
1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Mix thoroughly and refrigerate in a tightly covered container. To use: combine 1/3 cup of mix and 1-1/4 cups water in a saucepan. Cook while stirring until thickened. This equals one 10-ounce can of soup.

- For mock cream of mushroom, add 1/4 cup chopped, fresh mushrooms

Tips for Putting Recipes on a Diet

Tuning up your favorite recipes is really very simple. These easy suggestions demonstrate how you can still enjoy everyday meals, yet save a considerable amount of calories and fat by making smarter ingredient and preparation choices.

- Change a cooking technique

Prepare soups and stews in advance; let them cool, then remove the accumulated fat from the top before reheating. When you roast meat or make meat loaf, place the meat on a rack so the fat can drip away. When a recipe calls for ground meat, brown the meat and drain well before adding it to the other ingredients. Baste meats and poultry with tomato juice, wine, lemon juice, or broth instead of the fat drippings. Sauté chopped onions, garlic, and other vegetables in a small amount of broth instead of oil. Use cornstarch mixed with water or broth to thicken gravies instead of fat and flour.

- Reduce or eliminate an ingredient

Many recipes call for more salt, fat, or sugar than is needed for good taste. By experimenting, you can learn how much you actually need. For instance, you can omit both salt and oil from the water used to cook pasta without sacrificing taste. When a recipe calls for mayonnaise, mix equal amounts of reduced-fat or nonfat mayonnaise and low-fat or nonfat yogurt; use as a dressing for chicken or tuna salads, too.

- Substitute one ingredient for another

In many dishes you can make the following substitutions. Replace cream with evaporated milk; use low-fat or skim milk instead of whole milk. Replace ground beef with ground turkey in meat loaf, chili, and casseroles. Substitute yogurt for sour cream. If a recipe calls for buttered bread crumbs, try crushed cereal instead. Try a dash of hot pepper sauce or Worcestershire sauce instead of salt to flavor savory recipes.

The following recipes demonstrate how popular dishes can be tailored to fit a more healthful approach to eating.

Chili

1 pound lean, Select Grade ground beef
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 hard white onion, chopped
2 medium-size cans of red kidney beans
1 large (28 ounce) can tomatoes
1 green pepper, chopped
1 bay leaf (break it as you add it)
2 tablespoons dry red wine or 1 teaspoon of red wine vinegar and 1
tablespoon water
1 tablespoon chili powder (or more if you like it hot)

Spray your nonstick frying pan with oil spray until it glistens. Cook onion and garlic until onions are limp, stirring with plastic spoon. Scrape into a large saucepan. Cook ground beef in the same frying pan until crumbly and brown. Scrape onto a plate lined with paper towels. Blot and pat with another towel, absorbing as much fatty juice as possible. Add to the saucepan. Place kidney beans in a sieve or colander. Rinse with cool water. Add rinsed beans and all other ingredients to saucepan. Stir, cover, and simmer for 1 hour. Stir occasionally. Add water if necessary. In general, the thicker it gets, the better it tastes. (This dish cooks well in an electric Crock-Pot.) Instead of saltines, serve with hot tortillas.

Serves four.

Can be divided into smaller portions for freezer or refrigerator storage. To reheat, place in oil-sprayed baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes, or until bubbling.

Calories: 273

Fat: 10 grams, saturated fat: 4 grams

Sodium: 520 milligrams

Food exchanges: 1 starch, 1 vegetable, 3 lean meat

Tuna Fish Casserole

2 (6-1/2 ounce) cans water-packed tuna fish, drained

1/2 onion, chopped

2 celery stalks, chopped

1 green pepper, chopped

1 cup nonfat evaporated milk

4 medium potatoes, peeled

1 dash Tabasco sauce or a few grains of cayenne pepper

black pepper

1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese

Peel and boil the potatoes in unsalted water in a covered saucepan until a fork goes through easily (about 30 minutes). (Or microwave at high power for 12 minutes.) While potatoes cook, rinse and chop celery, green pepper, and onion. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Open tuna fish and drain the liquid. Coat 2-quart baking dish with oil spray.

In a large bowl, mash hot potatoes with 1/2 cup evaporated milk. (Leave it lumpy.) Mix in fish, onion, celery, green pepper, Tabasco or cayenne pepper, and the other 1/2 cup of milk. Spoon into baking dish. Sprinkle top with Parmesan cheese and black pepper. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes.

Serves six.

Keeps well in refrigerator, but does not freeze. Reheat in 350 degree oven for 15 minutes.

Calories: 181

Fat: 2 grams; saturated fat: 1 gram

Sodium: 279 milligrams

Food exchanges: 1-1/2 starch, 2 lean meat

Meat Loaf

2 celery stalks, chopped

1/2 pound lean, Select Grade ground beef

1/2 pound ground turkey

1/2 cup plain bread crumbs

1/2 cup wheat germ

1 medium onion

1 garlic clove

2 no-fat eggs (or egg substitute)

1/4 cup undiluted, nonfat evaporated milk

black pepper

pinch of dried thyme

1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste

Combine celery, turkey, beef, bread crumbs, wheat germ, a generous pinch of thyme, and black pepper. Add crushed garlic, using a garlic press. Grate the onion onto waxed paper and stir in. (Grating is fast, but hard on the eyes. Hold your breath. Rinse your hands in cold water immediately afterward.) Add egg substitute and milk. Blend thoroughly.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a loaf pan or baking dish with oil spray. Press mixture firmly into place. Top with undiluted tomato paste. Bake 45 minutes.

Serves six.

Also delicious as a cold lunch meat, with mustard or horseradish.

Calories: 241

Fat: 12 grams; saturated fat: 4 grams

Sodium: 342 milligrams

Food exchanges: 1 starch, 2 medium-fat meat

SMART SHOPPING

You can build a better diet and help improve your nutrition simply by making healthier choices at the supermarket.

Are you a smart shopper? If so, your shopping trip probably starts at home. Next time you're buying groceries, remember these smart shopping tips.

Before Shopping

- Take a look at what you have on hand
- Think about some of the meals you will make
- Plan on including a variety of foods that are low in fat, calories, and sodium from each of the food groups
- Write a list of what you need to buy
- Eat a meal or snack before shopping! If you are hungry, you might be tempted to buy foods you don't need

At the Store

- Be aware of distractions that may tempt you to buy foods that are not in line with your nutritional goals or foods that you tend to overeat
- Purchase only those foods on your list
- Refer to the nutrition label to see how a particular food fits into your healthy eating plan
- Compare nutrition labels of different brands of the same food
- Choose foods that are lower in fat, sodium, and calories rather than their high fat counterparts

Using Food Labels to Select Foods

Food labels provide important information that allows you to compare foods and make informed choices. Eating a variety of foods in moderate amounts is the key to balancing healthful food choices. It is the total diet, over one or more days, that counts. So with some planning -- which should include the help of a dietitian -- most foods can fit into your meal plan.

Your health professional has probably recommended that you eat less fat, less sugar, less sodium, and more dietary fiber. All of these are listed on the nutrition label.

The percent daily value (% Daily Value) gives a general idea of how much fat, sodium, carbohydrate, or dietary fiber a serving contributes to the overall daily diet. Use the % Daily Value information to quickly identify foods that might be low in fat and sodium and high in fiber. This will help you see how a particular food fits into your meal plan.

More About Nutrition Labels

Some nutrition labels provide exchange list information. If you do not see it on the label, many food manufacturers will provide this information on request. Exchange lists are groups of foods that are nutritionally alike, and they can help simplify meal planning for a healthful diet.

Check Out the Nutrition Facts

- Total fat and cholesterol

Fat is a concentrated source of calories, containing two to three times more calories per ounce than carbohydrates or proteins. So, it's the best place to cut back if you want to reduce total calorie intake. Nutrition experts recommend getting 30% or less of your calories from fat. This goal applies to total intake over time, not to a single food or meal. A diet with high fat content, especially one high in saturated fat, is associated with increased blood cholesterol, which increases risk for heart disease. It may also increase chances for some types of cancer.

- Sodium

Sodium is a mineral the body uses to control blood pressure and blood volume. Nutrition experts recommend that most people eat less sodium or salt. Some experts recommend a daily maximum of 3,000 milligrams of sodium, while others suggest a maximum of 2,400 milligrams. The % Daily Value is based on 2,400 milligrams. Diets high in sodium may increase chances for high blood pressure (hypertension) for some people. High blood

pressure is a condition in which your blood pressure goes up and stays above a normal level. It is a risk factor for heart attack and stroke.

- Carbohydrates and fiber

Carbohydrates are the main source of energy for the body. They also keep proteins from being used for energy and help the body to use fat. A healthful diet contains 50% to 60% of calories from carbohydrates and should include 20 to 30 grams of dietary fiber each day. Eating low fat foods that contain dietary fiber may reduce the risk for some cancers. These foods also promote regular bowel function and can help you feel full and satisfied while eating fewer calories.

Nutrient Content Claims on Labels Can Help

Nutrient content claims give consumers a quick idea of the amount of a particular nutrient in a food serving. Nutrition claims like low fat and light now have strict government definitions, so the terms have the same meaning regardless of the product or brand they appear on. This makes it even easier to determine how a particular packaged or prepared food fits into your meal plan. Use these descriptions to compare products and make informed food choices.

Understanding Claims on Food Labels

The following terms are based on standard serving sizes.

| LABEL CLAIM | DEFINITION |
|-----------------------|---|
| Calorie-free | Less than 5 calories |
| Low calorie | 40 calories or less |
| Reduced/less calories | At least 25% fewer calories |
| Light or lite | At least 1/3 fewer calories or 50% less fat |
| Sodium-free | Less than 5 milligrams sodium |
| Very low sodium | 35 milligrams sodium or less |
| Low sodium | 140 milligrams sodium or less |
| Reduced/less sodium | At least 25% less sodium |
| Light/lite in sodium | 50% less sodium |
| Fat-free | Less than 0.5 grams fat |
| Low fat | 3 grams fat or less |
| Reduced/less fat | At least 25% less fat |

| LABEL CLAIM | DEFINITION |
|----------------------------|--|
| Saturated fat-free | Less than 0.5 grams saturated fat |
| Low saturated fat | 1 gram saturated fat or less |
| Reduced/less saturated fat | At least 25% less saturated fat |
| Cholesterol-free | Less than 2 milligrams cholesterol and 2 grams saturated fat or less |
| Low cholesterol | 20 milligrams cholesterol or less and 2 grams saturated fat or less |
| Reduced/less cholesterol | At least 25% less cholesterol and 2 grams saturated fat or less |
| Sugar-free | Less than 1/2 gram sugar |
| Reduced/less sugar | At least 25% less sugar |

You Can Rely on the Label

Rest assured, when you see key words and claims on product labels, they mean what they say as defined by the government. You don't have to remember the definitions. But notice that the key words follow the same pattern for each nutrient:

- Free -- foods have the least amount
- Very low and low -- foods have a little more
- Reduced or less -- foods have 25% less of that nutrient

GETTING THE BEST HELP

Here are some suggestions.

National Organization

American Diabetes Association
1660 Duke Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Membership benefits include 12 issues of Forecast, an informative lifestyle magazine; discounts on ADA cookbooks; and membership in a local group. ADA groups sponsor a wide range of services and programs for people with diabetes.

Guidebooks and Cookbooks

The American Diabetes Association offers a wide variety of publications. To ask for a listing and to place an order, call 1-800-ADA-ORDER (1-800-232-6733). Helpful titles include:

- American Diabetes Association Complete Guide to Diabetes
- Diabetic Meals in 30 Minutes -- or Less!
- Diabetes Meal Planning Made Easy
- 101 Tips for Staying Healthy with Diabetes
- Month of Meals Cookbook Series
- Family Cookbook Series

Other Guidebooks Available for Purchase

Convenience Food Facts, Updated and Revised Edition
Arlene Monk and Nancy Cooper

Fast Food Facts
Marion J. Franz

Everything you need to know about how to use major brands of packaged food and fast food restaurants.

Managing Type II Diabetes. Your Invitation to a Healthier Lifestyle
(Revised & Updated)

Arlene Monk, Jan Pearson, Priscilla Hollander, Richard Bergenstal

Exchanges for All Occasions. Now with Carbohydrate Counting.
Your Guide to Choosing Healthy Foods Anytime Anywhere

Marion J. Franz

Available through CHRONIMED Publishing, 1-800-848-2793

Diabetes Treated Without Insulin: A Short Guide

Joslin Diabetes Center

Available from Joslin Diabetes Center

One Joslin Place, Boston, MA 02215

And Don't Forget Yourself

When you have diabetes, eating well and feeling well becomes a balancing act. But you can be in control. The four keys to successful control are 1) monitoring your blood glucose levels; 2) taking your medication, if prescribed; 3) exercising regularly; and 4) following your meal plan. With a plan tailored to your particular needs and lifestyle, this can be easier than you think. It's up to you to achieve your best possible health level, and you should feel proud of yourself as you achieve it.