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# **Managing Your Type 2 Diabetes With a Healthy Diet**

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# Objectives

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- Understand the importance of nutrition to diabetes management
- Outline current nutrition guidelines for diabetes management



# Why is Good Nutrition Important?

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- Eating a healthy diet can:
    - Help you control your blood sugars and blood lipids
    - Help you maintain a healthy weight or lose weight if you are overweight
    - Allow you to take less medication or avoid taking medication for your diabetes
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# Why is Good Nutrition Important?

- Eating a healthy diet can:
  - Prevent complications from high blood sugars like nerve problems, kidney problems, and vision problems
  - Prevent other complications like heart disease and circulatory problems



# Each Person With Diabetes is Different!

- Every person with diabetes should receive medical nutrition therapy based on his/her medical needs
- Your dietitian may suggest very specific goals for your weight, diet, and exercise depending on your health status



# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Lose weight if you are overweight
- Exercise to promote or maintain weight loss
- Monitor carbohydrate intake to maintain blood sugar control
- Obtain carbohydrates mainly from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and low-fat or skim milk

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Consume at least 130 grams carbohydrate per day (do not use low-carbohydrate diets to treat diabetes)
- Use sugar substitutes if desired
- Limit saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

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- Lose weight if you are overweight
  - Lose weight slowly and safely, 1-2 pounds weekly
  - Enjoy foods from all food groups. Avoid fad diets that eliminate any specific foods or groups of foods.
  - Eat smaller portions and exercise more



# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Exercise to promote or maintain weight loss (consult with your doctor before beginning)
  - 30 minutes most days of the week is recommended
  - Include aerobic exercise and resistance training for the best results
  - Start slowly and increase the duration and intensity of exercise if you are new to exercise.

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Monitor carbohydrate intake to maintain blood sugar control
  - Limit your carbohydrate intake to what is suggested by your dietitian
  - Use carbohydrate counting, the exchange system, or other methods to estimate your carbohydrate intake

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Obtain carbohydrates mainly from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and low-fat or skim milk.
  - These foods are the best carbohydrate sources
    - They are usually high in fiber and high in nutrients your body needs

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Carbohydrate sources
  - Even sugar and sweetened foods can be included in your diet when you have diabetes.
    - Substitute them for another carbohydrate in your diet now and then
    - These food are “empty calories” so should be limited

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Consume at least 130 grams of carbohydrate each day
  - Low-carbohydrate diets are not recommended for diabetes management
  - Carbohydrates contain important nutrients
  - Choose most of your carbohydrates from fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Use sugar substitutes if desired
  - Use only sugar substitutes that are approved by the FDA
  - Sugar substitutes can help you enjoy sweet treats more often
  - Sugar substitutes don't appear to cause weight loss or control blood sugars

# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

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- Limit saturated fats, *trans* fat, and dietary cholesterol
  - These types of dietary fats and cholesterol can contribute to heart disease, which is related to diabetes
  - When you use fats, use liquid oils instead of solid fats when possible.



# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

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- *Trans* fat are produced by the food industry by taking liquid oils and changing them into solid fats.
  - This process improves the shelf life and stability of flavors of processed foods



# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

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- *Trans* fats are found mainly in packaged and processed foods.
- To limit *trans* fats
  - Limit use of packaged crackers and cookies
  - Limit use of commercial bakery products like cakes, cookies, etc
  - Use soft margarine instead of stick margarine
  - Read food labels for *trans* fats



# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

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- Dietary cholesterol is found mainly in animal foods.
  - By limiting saturated fats you will also limit dietary cholesterol



# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

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- Fats are higher in calories than carbohydrates, so eating less fat can help you lose weight.
  - Use lean meats and poultry and include fish, nuts, and legumes to help reduce your intake of saturated fats and cholesterol
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# Nutrition Guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes

- Where do I start?
  - Talk to your doctor, dietitian, and diabetes educator about which changes are most important for you
  - Start slowly by changing your habits one at a time
  - Seek support from your dietitian and/or diabetes support group

# Summary

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- Good nutrition is one of the keys to managing Type 2 Diabetes
- Nutrition guidelines for Type 2 Diabetes focus on controlling carbohydrate and fat intake
- Weight management and exercise are also key
- Seek help to set and reach your nutrition and exercise goals



# Education Opportunities

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- Call our FHCP Diabetes Education Department to schedule self-management education classes taught by diabetes educators and registered dietitians
- Call today for our next available class at 386-226-4518

