Diets for DIABETES

Diet Tips for Managing Diabetes!

Diets for Diabetes

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Disclaimer

We hope you enjoy reading this publication, however we do suggest you read our disclaimer.

All the material written in this document is provided for informational purposes only and is general in nature.

Every person is a unique individual and what has worked for some or even many may not work for you. Any information perceived as advice must be considered in light of your own particular set of circumstances.

The author or person sharing this information does not assume any responsibility for the accuracy or outcome of your use of the content.

Every attempt has been made to provide well researched and up to date content at the time of writing. Now all the legalities have been taken care of, please enjoy the content.

Introduction

When confronted by a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes, or even pre-diabetes, the biggest single realization is that what got them there is their diet, or eating habits.

Sure, other factors, such as exercise and even genetics may have played a part, but they only influenced the big one - diet.

From there, it is a logical conclusion that what got you there, won't get you out of there. For your health's sake - vitality, mobility, longevity and more – changes are essential.

A lifetime of dietary habit cannot be overturned at a single sitting, nor is this something that can be 'cured' so you can return to your old eating ways.

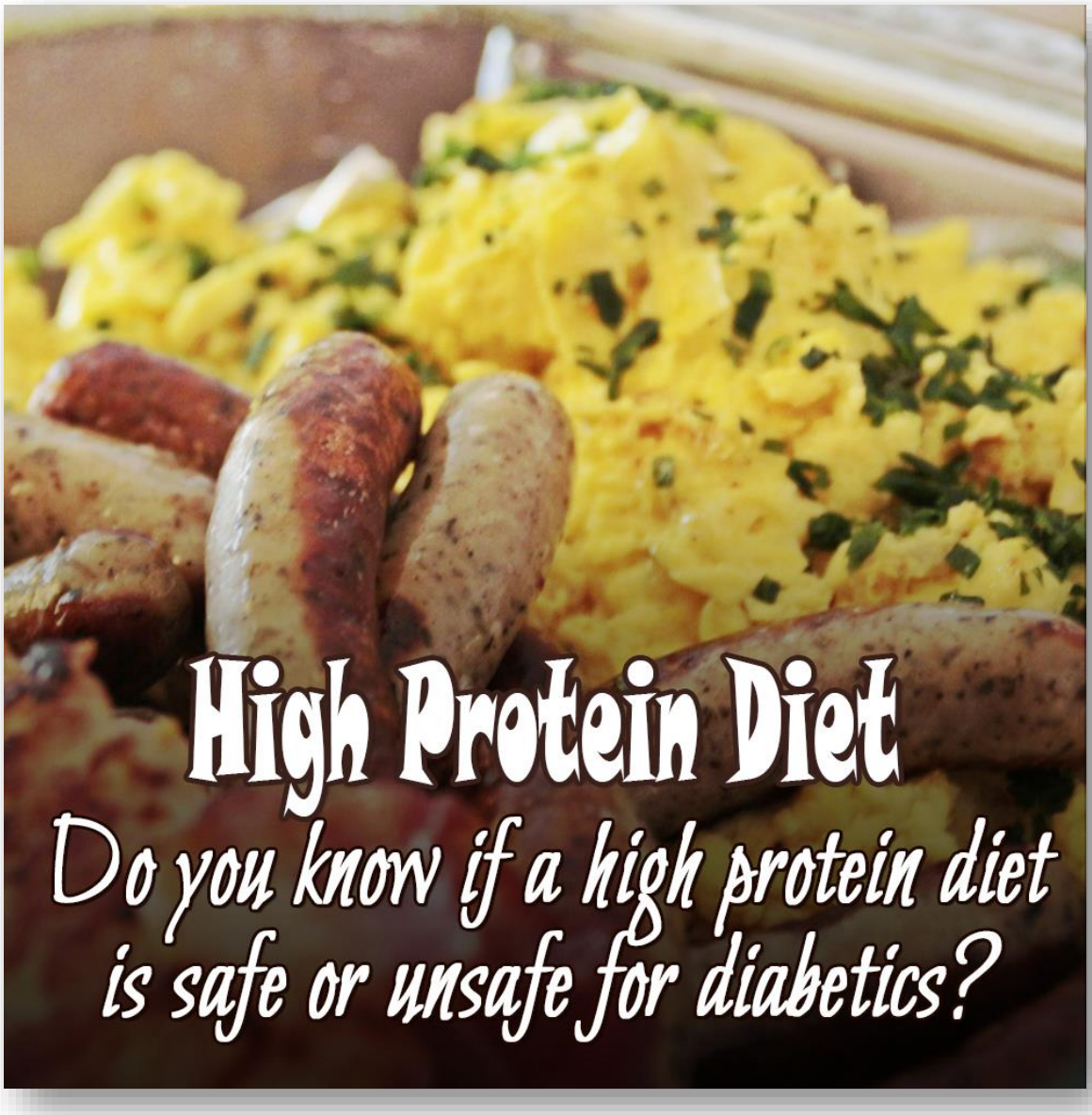
This eBook discusses different diets that have proven effective for turning around the effects of persistent high blood sugar.

You will see that being healthy and avoiding or reversing diabetes symptoms does not have to be a tasteless experience. These diets are not solely for diabetics; many non-diabetics base their eating behaviors around them.

They do it for taste and for health, knowing they can enjoy tasty and wholesome food now, and avoid diabetes later.

High Protein Diet for Diabetics

Protein is one of the three main sources of macronutrients the body needs. The other two important macronutrients are fats and carbohydrates. Protein plays a crucial role in growth and development of new tissues.



It is also an important constituent of each cell in the body. This macronutrient is not only important for growth, it can also be converted by the body into glucose for energy.

If you are thinking of switching to a high-protein diet you need to understand the advantages and disadvantages, especially if you have been diagnosed with diabetes.

Advantages of Following A High-Protein Diet

- Reduced Appetite

One of the advantages is a reduced appetite. Protein can help you feel fuller for much longer than other types of macronutrients because protein takes more time to digest than carbohydrates.

- Improved Blood Levels

You'll benefit from improved levels of blood lipids, and insulin and blood glucose levels are also improved.

- Ketosis and Weight Loss

Another advantage is a high protein diet allows the body to undergo ketosis. This is the stage when the body begins to burn fat instead of carbohydrate-derived glucose as its source of fuel. This is due to the limited availability of glucose, due to restricting carb intake.

If you reduce your intake of carbohydrates and increase your protein intake, weight loss can be achieved more easily.

It is important to keep in mind that these benefits may not be equal for everyone. It is always important to consider individual differences in health status and food preferences when making changes to any diet.

Disadvantages of Following A High-Protein Diet

- For some diabetics, the excessive intake of protein can lead to low levels of insulin. This can translate to the poor regulation of blood glucose.
- Greater calcium excretion which may have adverse impacts on bone health.
- Dry mouth and bad breath.
- Diarrhea and/or constipation.
- Headaches and fatigue.

Some experts believe that any benefits achieved by switching to a high-protein diet may be due to the fact that the patients are basically reducing their carbohydrate intake, rather than eating healthy protein-rich foods. This is why some experts suggest that instead of switching to a high-protein diet, a 'Consistent Carbohydrate Diet' be considered instead.

What is a 'Consistent Carbohydrate Diet'?

Although this diet does not differ much from a 'regular' diet, patients have to monitor their carbohydrate intake. This means for every meal and snack. This close monitoring, according to some experts, is the type of diet that works best for type 2 diabetics.

NOT Recommended for Diabetic Nephropathy Patients

A high protein diet is not recommended for people who have diabetic nephropathy. This condition requires individuals to consume less protein. Their protein intake should not exceed one gram per kilogram of their body weight. This is because increased protein can contribute to further damage of their kidneys.

Patients diagnosed with diabetic nephropathy must work closely with their healthcare provider to ensure they don't become protein deficient.

Protein for Diabetics

The American Diabetes Association suggests that people with diabetes consume fish as their source of protein at least twice a week. Consumption of processed foods and red meat should be limited and lean meats should be chosen.

Anyone who wants to adhere to a high protein diet should first consult their healthcare provider. Your body requirements will differ to someone else, especially if you have been diagnosed with any type of chronic disease or illness, including diabetes.

Evidence from studies suggests there is no set amount of protein that a diabetic should consume. Their intake of macronutrients must always be based on their metabolic goals, current eating patterns and food preferences.

In conclusion, if you're wondering whether a high protein diet is safe or unsafe for a diabetic to switch to, it depends on the individual! This is why it's important to speak to your doctor before you go making big changes to your diet habits.

Whatever changes you make in your diet, make sure it's under the supervision of an expert. Think of food administration like a drug. It has to be taken as prescribed, in the right amounts at the right time.

Each food choice is also crucial. It can be beneficial, or pose as a risk, especially for diabetics. Therefore, don't rely on your instincts. Ask the experts!

Mediterranean Diet for Managing Diabetes

A Mediterranean diet provides plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, and monounsaturated fats should not exceed more than 40% of the total calorie consumption. However, if you are a diabetic, you may be researching to see if the Mediterranean diet is a healthy diet for you to follow.

What The Studies Say About The Mediterranean Diet for Diabetics

There have been studies taken to see how this type of diet affects diabetics. Here are a few findings.

- It reduces weight and lowers fasting blood sugar levels.

Study findings published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* showed that those who followed a Mediterranean diet lost more weight than those study participants who followed a low-fat diet. Study participants who ate the low-fat diet were able to lose 6.4 pounds and those who followed the Mediterranean Diet over the same period lost approx. 10 pounds.

Out of the 322 participants, 36 of them had diabetes. After two years, those who were on the Mediterranean diet were the only ones who experienced a reduction in their fasting blood glucose levels.

- It lowers HbA1c levels.

There is evidence to show that the Mediterranean diet helps not just in the prevention of type 2 diabetes, but also in reducing HbA1c levels.

- It lowers blood pressure, cholesterol and triglycerides.

This diet has been found helpful in lowering blood pressure levels and improving triglyceride and cholesterol levels.
Experts also say that the Mediterranean diet can enhance the functioning of the inner walls of the blood vessels and lead to the reduction of inflammation that can also be present in the blood vessels.

- It lowers the risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

In an Australian study which had 40,000 men and women as participants, it showed that those who consumed recommended foods from the Mediterranean diet were found to have lowered their risk of cardiovascular disease up to 30%.

The participants of this study were aged between 40 to 69 and the study was performed over a 10 year period. The diabetic men and women of the study were able to reduce their risk of heart disease up to an impressive 79%.

A separate study suggested that this type of diet can help lower the risk of heart disease because it can reduce systolic blood pressure levels, plasma glucose levels and blood lipid levels.

- It lowers the risk of many diabetes complications.

Diabetes is known to increase your risk of heart disease and other cardiovascular diseases. A Mediterranean diet will greatly lower your risk of developing other diabetes complications. Lowering your risk for further complications is a huge benefit and worth your consideration of following this diet.

- It may prevent the development of type 2 diabetes.

A study of 14,000 healthy individuals over a 4.5 year period, showed that those who followed this diet or one very similar to the Mediterranean diet, reduced their risk of developing diabetes up to 83%. These findings were published in the *British Medical Journal*.

Some of the Foods Allowed on the Mediterranean Diet

- Whole Grains

Good sources of whole grains are farro, buckwheat, brown rice, quinoa and barley. A Mediterranean diet allows you to eat tortillas, pastas and rolls, just always choose the whole grain versions.

- Legumes, Nuts and Seeds

Sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, walnuts, almonds, kidney beans and lentils will become some of your staples on this diet.

- Fruits and Vegetables

Some of the best choices of vegetables include Brussels sprouts, avocados, olives, asparagus, eggplants, cucumbers and other leafy greens. Fruits such as berries, dates, grapes, melons, apples and pomegranates are excellent options.

Mediterranean dieters rarely eat red meat and use only vegetable and plant oils for cooking, such as olive oil. They rely on herbs and spices for flavoring their dishes. Examples of these include saffron, cumin, garlic, rosemary, basil, chili powder, ginger, mint and oregano.

If this diet sounds like it would suit you, then speak to your nutritionist or doctor. It certainly may be just what the doctor orders!

The DASH Diet For Diabetes – Is It Safe For Diabetics?

The DASH diet stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. This diet has been shown to lower blood pressure and help to prevent stroke, heart disease, certain forms of cancer and diabetes.

The diet's main focus is to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables and cut down on sweet, salty and fatty foods as it is based around foods high in calcium, potassium, magnesium, antioxidants and dietary fibers.

The DASH diet has been confirmed to improve many issues associated with diabetes including insulin resistance, hyperlipidemia (high cholesterol) and obesity. It comes highly recommended by the American Diabetes Association as a diet to help control diabetes.

DASH Diet A Safe Diet For Diabetics

The DASH diet is used widely over America and Canada and is said to be perfectly safe as well as one of the best diets to help manage diabetes. Whilst it is not well known in other parts of the world it has been placed as one of the 3 best diets in the world for diabetics.

DASH follows the following table of foods and servings to help you make the best informed choices on which foods you should be eating. This table is only a guide, it doesn't show the exact foods you should be eating, just the particular food groups.

For diabetics, it is best to make choices of vegetables that are not starchy (such as potatoes) or only choose to eat them in moderation.

DASH Diet Recommendations

The diet consists of the following serves of foods:

- 6-8 serves of wholegrains per day (i.e. brown rice, pastas, wholegrain bread)
- 4-5 serves of vegetables per day (i.e. pumpkin, sweet potato, broccoli)
- 4-5 serves of fruit per day (i.e. apple, banana, pear)
- 2-3 serves of fat-free or low-fat dairy (i.e. skim milk, Greek yogurt, cottage cheese)

- 4-5 serves of nuts, seeds, legumes per week (unsalted)
- Less than 6 serves per day of lean meats, poultry and fish
- Less than 5 serves per week of sweets
- 2-3 serves per day of fats and oils

This may seem very generous, but the recommended serving sizes are small. For example, a meat, fish or poultry serve may only be 1 ounce.

Serving Sizes

The examples of serving sizes are as follows:

Whole grains – 1 slice bread, ½ cup cooked pasta, rice
Fruits – ½ cup fresh juice, 1 med piece of fruit, ¼ cup dried fruit
Vegetables – ½ cup cooked vegetables, 1 cup leafy greens
Dairy – 1 cup low-fat milk or yogurt, 2 cups cottage cheese
Meats/poultry/fish – 70g-100g of meats
Lentils/beans – ½ cup beans, lentils, peas
Nuts/seeds – ¼ cup unsalted nuts, 2 tablespoons seeds, 2 tablespoons peanut butter
Fats/oils – 1 teaspoon margarine, 1 teaspoon vegetable oil, 1 tablespoon mayonnaise or salad dressing

Replacing several meals per week containing red meats with lentils, fish or other alternative options is also recommended for the diet. Changing to this diet gradually is highly recommended as changing everything at once can cause digestive issues such as bloating and diarrhea.

Gradually add one food group at a time to reduce stress to the digestive system.

Portion sizing is also important when following this diet as a diabetic and some tables do not show the sizing, just the serves of the foods you should be consuming.

Portion control plays a large role in diets as a diabetic, as some foods are only allowed in moderation due to the carbohydrate or starch content.

It is important not to leave out certain fruits and vegetables from the diet as all fruits and vegetables contain certain nutrients and natural antioxidants needed for the body.

Vegetables containing starch are recommended to only be eaten once a day as too much starch can be bad for a diabetic.

It is important to speak to your health care professional or dietician before changing to any diet, as some cases can be difficult to manage with foods alone.

Is The Paleo Diet A Healthy Diet For Diabetics?

A Paleo diet basically consists of lean meat, nuts, fruits and vegetables. This diet is devoid of processed foods and anything artificial. It's easy to remember what foods are allowed, by thinking about what your ancestor's many years ago would have eaten.

For example a man who lived many thousands of years ago is not going to go shopping and buy canned goods or sugar-sweetened beverages. Instead, they would hunt for meat and search for edible foods to pick, such as vegetables, fruits, seeds and nuts. Nothing would be processed!

They didn't have a fridge, however, they did have lean muscles. If you want to have a lean, healthy body like your ancestors, you certainly can if you want to follow the Paleo diet and eat whole, all natural foods.

Naturally, you need to exercise too, as there were no couches to relax in at the end of a hard day. Exercising helps to not only burn calories, it helps to keeps your blood pressure levels, cholesterol levels and blood sugar levels within a healthy range.

Therefore, if you are a diabetic, the Paleo diet may be recommended to you by your health care professional.

Paleo Diet - Good for Health, Good for Diabetes

The Paleo diet is a diet where you will be eating foods loaded with fiber, healthy fats and proteins, and as they are not processed you will be able to naturally reduce your sugar and sodium intake. Plus, you'll have a healthy digestive system and balanced acid and alkaline levels.

Another added bonus is the regular intake of essential antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals.

You'll also be eating only 'complex' carbs, therefore you won't experience sugar spikes as you do with 'simple' carbohydrate foods.

Another reason why the Paleo diet is good for individuals, including those diagnosed with diabetes, is that it eliminates foods that contain substances that cause inflammation in the body. Examples include trans fats, canola oil, soybean oil and industrial seed oils.

You'll find you won't be eating foods that cause gut irritation. Instead, you'll be eating foods that help you restore your insulin sensitivity, fight inflammation and heal your gut. This is made possible, by eating probiotic and prebiotic foods, and foods such as bone broth and leafy green vegetables.

Study Results for Following The Paleo Diet Vs The Low fat Diet

- *In patients with diabetes.*

Experts conducted a study which compared a low fat diet and the Paleo diet for individuals with type 2 diabetes. The results showed that those who followed the Paleo diet experienced greater improvements in their blood pressure, blood sugar levels and triglycerides. The Paleo group also had a greater reduction in their weight, body mass index and waist circumference.

- *Postmenopausal and obese women.*

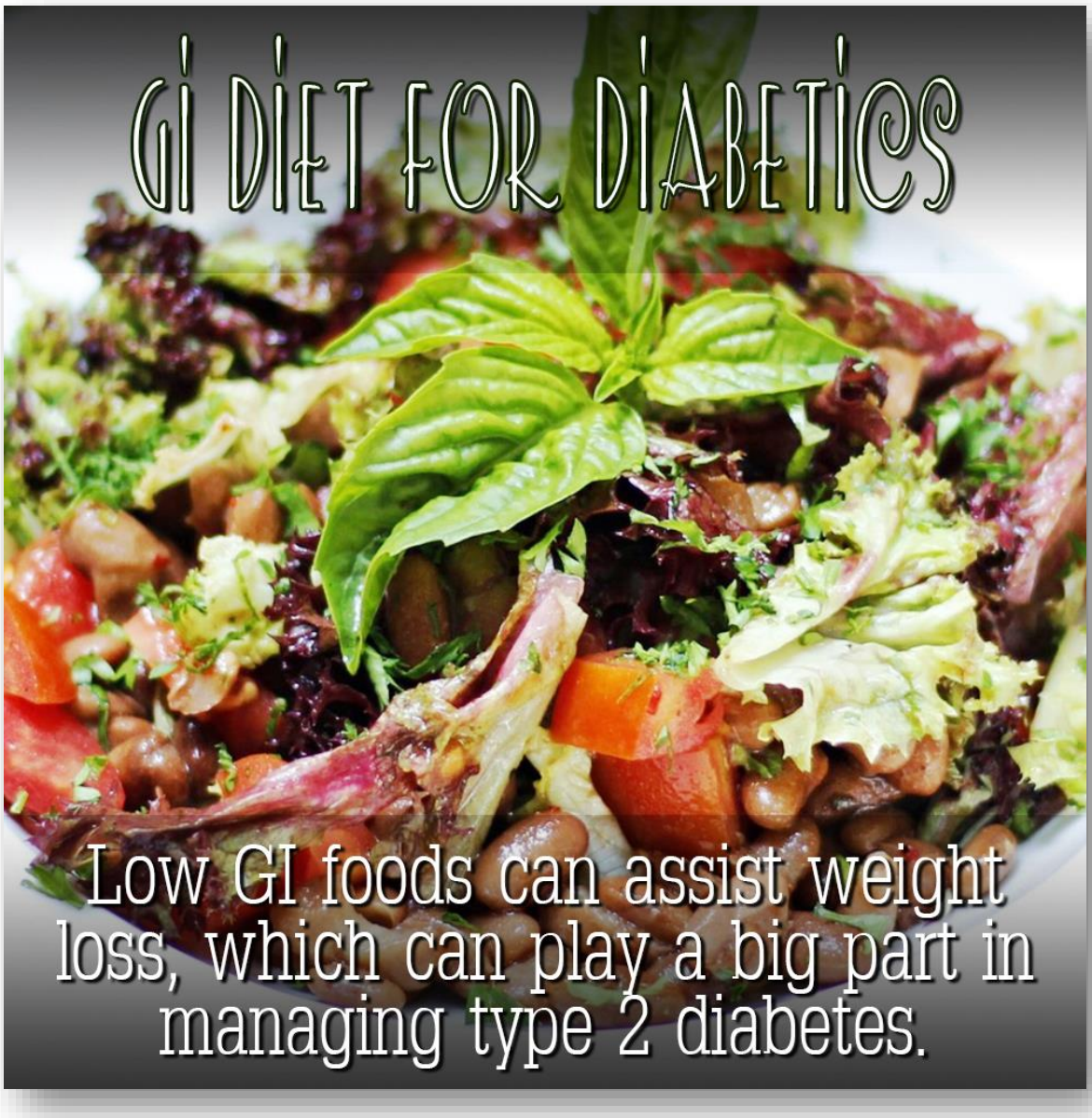
Another study compared Paleo dieters to a low fat diet among postmenopausal and obese women. Some of the findings showed greater fat loss and positive metabolic improvements among the women following the Paleo diet. These improvements in the metabolic markers included lowered blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels. The same study also showed that adhering to the Paleo diet can lead to a 50% reduction of fat storage in the liver.

These findings show that the Paleo diet is a healthy diet for diabetics, and a worthy diet for anyone who isn't diabetic too.

Remember, the Paleo diet also includes living a healthy lifestyle, therefore, pay attention to your lifestyle habits. Make sure you get plenty of rest and exercise and manage your stress levels while you're at it!

Glycemic Diet for Diabetics – Foods to Eat and Foods to Avoid

The glycemic index, or GI for short, is implemented by people with diabetes to rate how carbohydrates in certain foods will impact their blood sugar levels.



Foods and beverages provide your body with the carbohydrates that fuel your body. The glycemic index is used to measure whether these foods will cause your blood glucose levels to raise slowly or rapidly over a time frame of usually 2 hours.

Low GI foods gradually release glucose into the blood stream, as they break down slowly. As these foods are digested more slowly, they keep you feeling full for longer.

A dietician should be consulted if you are diagnosed as diabetic. He/she will provide you with the right instruction to follow the diet.

Low GI Foods to Include

Some foods that are on the low GI part of the scale include:

- **Most fresh fruits** –peaches (canned in natural juice as well), apples, pears, citrus fruits, mangoes, apricots.
- **Most vegetables** – carrots, onions, capsicum/peppers/chilies, mushrooms, cabbage, broccoli, eggplant, orange sweet potatoes.
- **Dairy** – Milk, Greek yogurt, soy milk,
- **Legumes** – soy beans, chick peas, lentils, canned kidney beans.
- **Grains** – cous-cous, pasta, noodles, barley, basmati rice.
- **Breads** – choose breads with dense grains or seeded i.e. soy & linseed, wholegrain or mixed grain, sourdough.
- **Cereals & snacks** – Traditional rolled oats, All bran, nut & seed muesli bars, hommus, unsalted nuts i.e. peanuts, cashews.

Meal planning is necessary when maintaining this diet, as some high GI foods are also nutritious and needed, so it is recommended to combine them with a low GI food to balance out the blood glucose levels.

When consumed alone, high GI foods are absorbed into the blood stream very fast, causing a significantly large spike in your blood sugar levels.

High GI foods can sometimes be of value to diabetics. If a person with diabetes experiences a hypoglycemic event, hypo for short, the blood sugars will fall below the standard range.

Consuming a high GI food (generally something sugary i.e. candies, sodas) will quickly restore their blood sugars back to normal fixing the issue for the time being.

However, in most cases, diabetics should avoid high GI foods or at least pair them with a low GI option on occasion.

High GI Foods to Avoid

A small list of certain high GI foods that should be avoided includes:

- **Breads** – white bread, french baguette, bagels, white wraps.
- **Vegetables** –white potatoes, corn, parsnips, pumpkin, frozen chips or french fries.
- **Fruits** – watermelon, rock melon, pineapple, honeydew melon, dates.
- **Dairy** – ice-cream, sweetened yogurts, coconut yogurt.
- **Cereals & snacks** – pretzels, cornflakes, coco pops, sultana bran, buttered/sugared popcorn, donuts, candy, rice cakes, maple flavored syrup, sugary baked goods.
- **Grains & staples**– white and short grain rice including instant rice, taco shells, muesli, granola, instant mash potato.

Consuming too many high GI foods can be detrimental to your health. High GI diets have been linked to several diseases and conditions including heart disease and breast cancer.

The benefits of consuming a low GI diet are significantly the opposite. A low GI diet may reduce your risks of both cancer and heart disease although further research is being done to scientifically prove this.

Low GI foods can assist weight loss, which can help in managing type 2 diabetes, as well as reducing your levels of cholesterol by up to 9.6%.

The GI of a food can sometimes be difficult to calculate, although speaking with a registered dietician should supply you with the knowledge to make the best choices of the foods you eat.

Difference Between Glycemic Index and Glycemic Load

The glycemic index (GI) and glycemic load (GL) are tools used to help inform people with diabetes what foods they should be choosing, to help keep their blood glucose levels in check.

The glycemic index measures how fast your blood sugar levels rise after eating particular types of food.

Some low GI foods cause your blood sugar level to rise slowly, while others - high and medium GI foods - cause them to rise more rapidly.

However, this measurement does not take into account the portion sizing of the food, or total sugar 'load'. This is where the glycemic load table comes into play.

The glycemic load is used to give a more practical indication of the affect the foods, in given quantities, will have on your blood sugar levels.

Glycemic Index

The glycemic index, or GI, is a helpful tool to guide you in making the most informed choices of foods containing carbohydrates. When carbohydrates break down in the body they are turned into glucose which your body uses for energy.

The glycemic index is measured on a scale of 0-100. Pure glucose is the highest with the number of 100. The foods are determined on 3 different levels:

- Low GI: GI less than 55
- Medium GI: GI between 55 – 70
- High GI: GI over 70

Low GI foods are the best foods to choose. However, if you choose to eat a high GI food, it is best balanced out by also consuming a low GI food. This will result in a milder rise in levels.

Some examples of where foods sit on this scale include:

- Low GI: Traditional or steel cut oats, most fruits, beans and lentils.
- Medium GI: Cous-cous, basmati rice, wholemeal bread.
- High GI: Wraps, melons, short grain rice.

Glycemic Load

The glycemic load, GL for short, is calculated by taking the number of grams of carbohydrates per serving, multiplying it by the GI number and then dividing it by 100. These figures are then rounded to the nearest number.

The aim is to keep the total GL number of the day under 100. Some examples of this table are:

- The GI of a carrot is 47 with approximately 5g of carbohydrates -
  Therefore: GL= 47 x 5/100 = 2.35 (2)

- The GI of white bread is 70 with approximately 14g of carbohydrates –
  Therefore: GL = 70 x 14/100 = 9.8 (10)

- The GI of oatmeal is 58 with approximately 21g of carbohydrates –
  Therefore: GL = 58 x 21/100 = 12.18 (12)

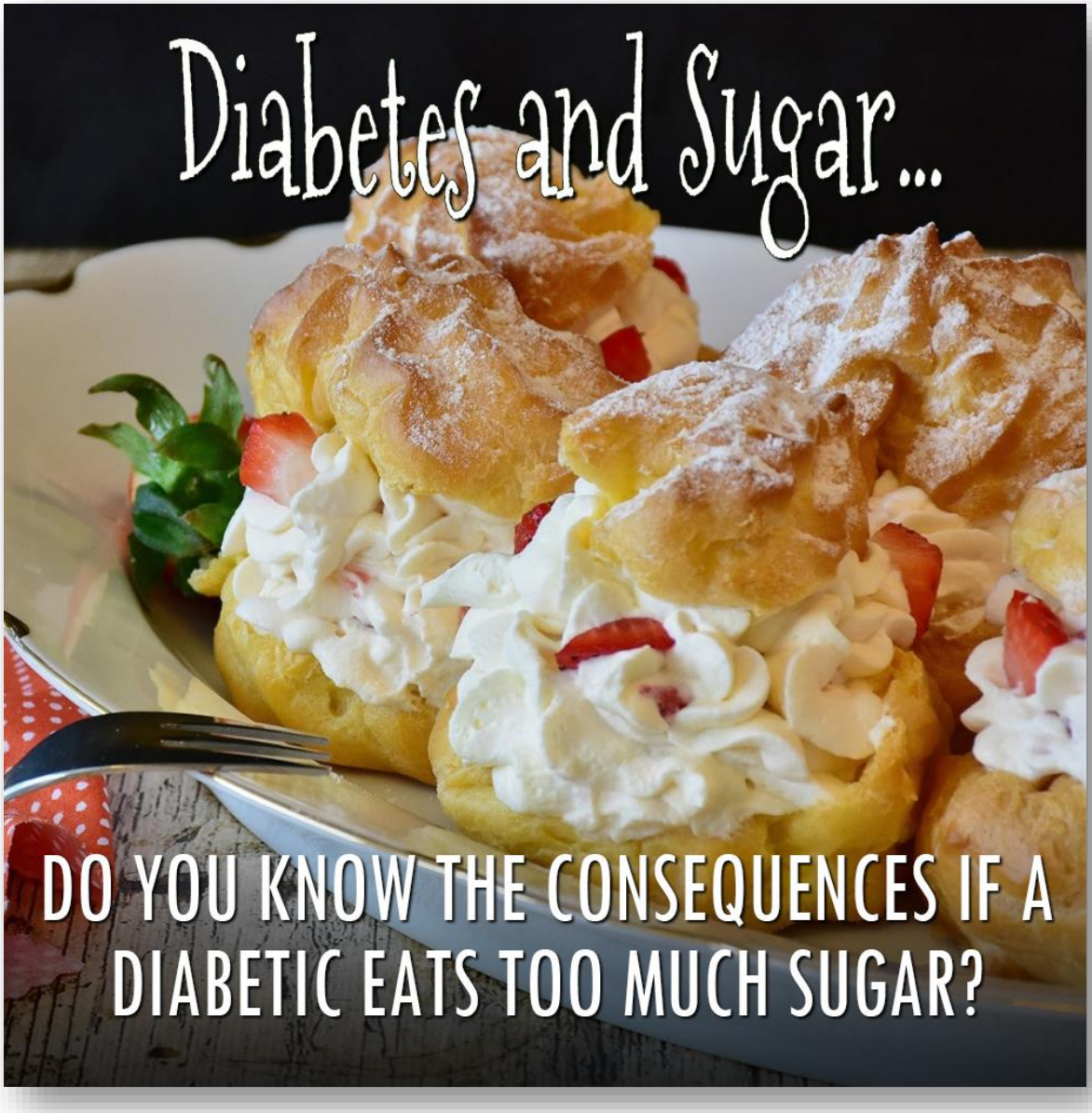
Due to the fact that the glycemic load looks at both components of a food, (that is, Glycemic Index and volume) a food with a high GI and a low GL may be better for you than expected. Assessing both components of a food may give you a better range in what you can safely eat.

Eating both low GI and low GL foods together will help you to feel fuller for longer helping you to eat less. Combining the two dietary tools will help with the management of diabetes, as well as prevent further diseases, complications and even obesity in the future.

Be sure to combine them with regular physical activity for the best results in controlling blood sugar levels.

What Happens When A Diabetic Eats Too Much Sugar?

Everyone experiences food cravings from time to time and quite often the targets are foods laden with sugar. These sugar binges affect almost everyone. If they are only a rare occurrence, the effects may not be noticeable. However, what really happens when a diabetic binges on sugar-laden foods?



The severity of damage that may result from a sugar binge episode depends largely on the quantity of sugar ingested, and the regularity. If your sugar bingeing happens on a regular basis, it is not at all healthy! It may cost you your health and eventually your life.

Diabetic vs Non-Diabetic Response

After a sugar binge episode, you are very likely to suffer from immediate consequences, due to the 'sugar spike'. Symptoms occur soon after, as your body is letting you know that you have too much glucose in your bloodstream.

In this circumstance, a person with a healthy insulin response (a non-diabetic) will very quickly release insulin to deal with the excess glucose.

However, a diabetic's response will not be the same. A type 1 diabetic's response will mostly depend on their self-administration of insulin.

A type 2 diabetic, who is not likely not taking insulin, will experience prolonged, elevated blood glucose levels, with all the problems and dangers that incurs.

That is because even though insulin is released in response to the sugar load, the insulin-resistant cells simply fail to respond effectively, leaving the blood awash with glucose.

Immediate and Short-term Effects of Eating Too Much Sugar

Excessive Urination

Frequent or excessive urination is medically referred to as polyuria. Polyuria occurs as a result of having too much glucose in the blood. Polyuria is the body's desperate way of removing glucose from the blood.

Kidneys are designed to absorb some glucose to be rechanneled back to the bloodstream. However, for diabetics, each time their kidneys create urine, excess glucose is added to the urine, instead of directing it back to the bloodstream. The

kidneys draw additional water from the body to create the urine needed to expel the excess sugar.

Excessive Thirst

Excessive thirst is medically referred to as polydipsia. This occurs as a result of polyuria, as the body exerts efforts to rehydrate itself. Because the body is directing available fluids to the kidneys, the cells send dehydrated signals to the brain.

Once your brain senses the occurrence of dehydration in the blood, it will immediately create the urge to drink more fluids. The mistake people can make here is that because they've been urinating excessively, they believe they've been drinking too much.

What they may not realize is that their excessive thirst and urination are all caused by too much sugar. In some other cases, people tend to quench their thirst by drinking more fluids containing sugar, such as sodas and other sweetened beverages. As a consequence, the complications become even worse.

Excessive Hunger

Because the muscle cells of a type 2 diabetic are less responsive to insulin than they should be, glucose stays in the blood, instead of being accepted into the cells to be used for their energy needs.

When the cells can't gain access to glucose, they will automatically send out signals that they require sustenance. The brain interprets this as a starvation response and sends out signals through its signaling hormones such as ghrelin, leptin and orexin. These hormones signal the hypothalamus part of the brain to trigger feelings of hunger.

This is because the brain doesn't have any idea that the cells have been starving in the midst of abundant blood glucose. Due to deficiency, and/or inefficiency of insulin, this glucose in the blood remains inaccessible to cells.

This is not an exhaustive list of acute complications for diabetes. Other complications that may be experienced after having a sugar binge can be headaches, fatigue, confusion, difficulty concentrating and a dry mouth.

Longer-Term Effects

Excessive consumption of sugar can have toxic effects on the body's organs. If left untreated, the high levels of sugar can result in cellular dysfunction which sets the stage for insulin resistance, and can worsen other symptoms of diabetes.

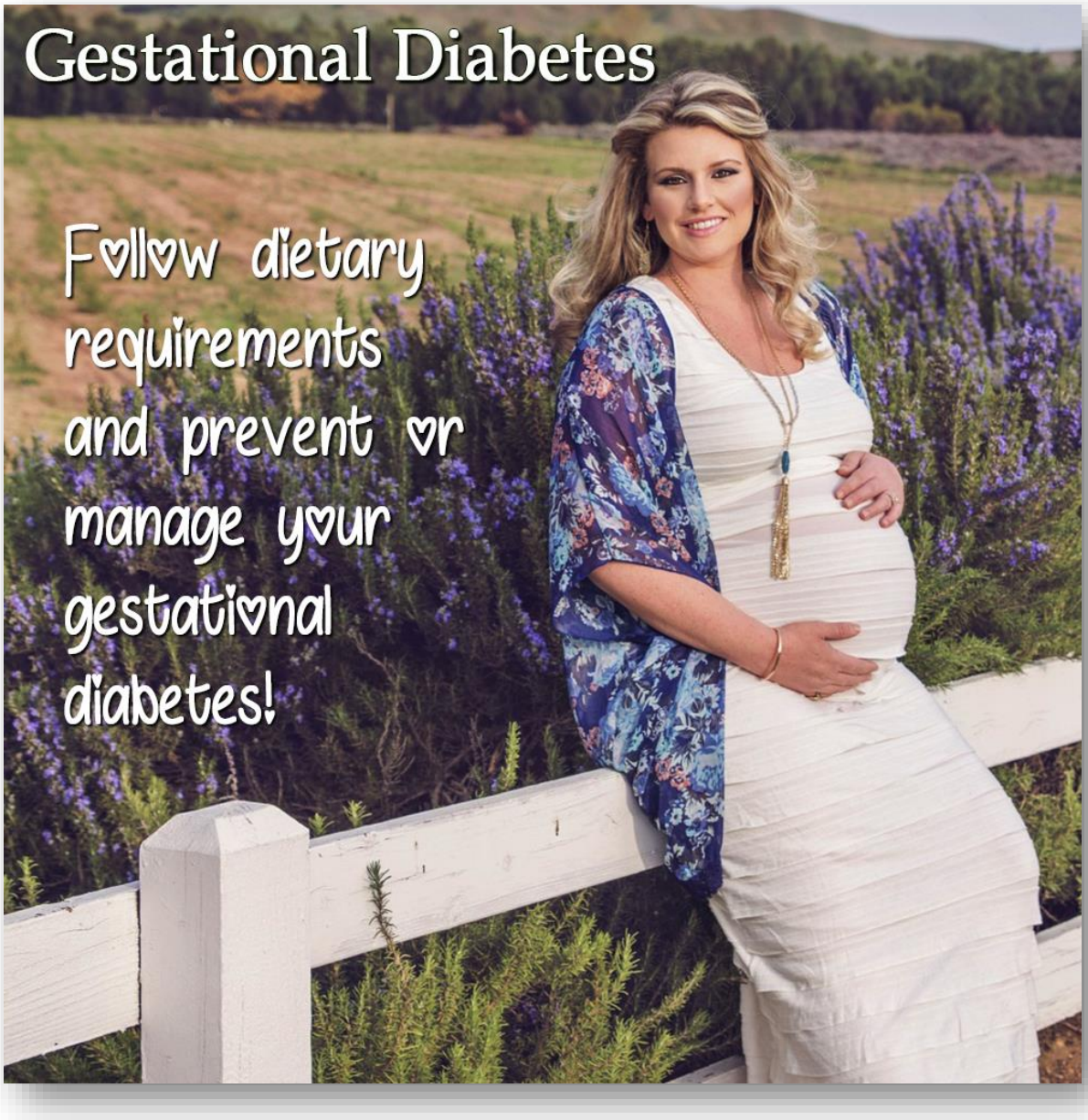
If eating too many sugary foods becomes a common habit, the risk of stroke and heart attack is multiplied. Many sugar-laden foods are also full of 'unhealthy' fats.

That doesn't mean all fats are unhealthy, however, there are some that are. Foods high in both sugar and fat, contribute to the possibility of inflamed and clogged blood vessels.

Think twice before indulging in too many sugary foods. They won't help your health, regardless of whether you are a diabetic or not.

Gestational Diabetes Dietary Requirements and Management

When you digest the foods you eat, most break down into a simple sugar called glucose, which is your body's main source of energy. This fuels the body with the help of insulin (produced by the pancreas).



However if you do not produce enough insulin, or the body's cells do not respond effectively to it, glucose will then be kept in your blood stream instead of being utilized by the cells and converted into energy.

Hormones in pregnancy can reduce the effectiveness of insulin, causing your body to need to make more. This may result in your body not keeping up with the production needed, resulting in high sugar levels. That's when gestational diabetes happens.

Best Practice for Managing GD

Following the right diet and exercising is vital if you have been diagnosed with gestational diabetes. Your doctor should refer you to a diabetes specialist as well as a dietician. These two professionals will help you learn how to maintain your GD.

There are 3 main components to successfully maintain your GD:

- Monitor blood glucose levels daily at recommended times
- Healthy eating plans
- Daily exercise/physical activities

Most cases of gestational diabetes are managed with diet and exercise alone, although some severe cases require medication or insulin injections.

Monitoring

To test your BGL (blood glucose level) you will be given a machine, which looks like a pen that will ‘‘prick’’ your finger and draw a few drops of blood onto a test strip.

This test strip is then inserted in to a BGL monitor to test your levels. Measurements are generally taken as soon as you wake and then 2 hours after each meal.

Diet

When you visit your nutritionist they will help you draw up a plan of foods you should eat and foods to avoid. Some key points to remember when planning your diet are to:

- Include fiber rich foods – e.g. wholegrains, oats, beans etc.
- Choose low GI rice – basmati or brown
- Eat small amounts often or healthy snacks between main meals
- Include a complex carbohydrate in every meal – e.g. sweet potato, legumes, yogurt
- Limit unhealthy fats – no fast foods or processed foods, pick lean meats
- Include 2-3 serves of protein daily – e.g. lean meat, eggs, low fat cheese
- Add calcium and iron rich foods – e.g. milk, cheese, red meat
- Avoid starch – e.g potatoes (in moderation), white rice, corn
- Eliminate sugary foods – e.g. baked goods, soft drinks, white/raw sugar
- Use alternative sugars – e.g. Equal, Stevia, Natvia

Exercise

Physical activity has a key role in managing gestational diabetes as it helps to reduce insulin resistance. Daily walking is a good way to not only moderate pregnancy weight gain but to help manage your BGL.

There are various other types of physical activity that you can pursue, although it is recommended to ask your doctor or midwife if you are thinking of doing anything strenuous like lifting weights or high intensity workouts.

Never over-exert yourself and always stay hydrated.

After Care

After pregnancy most women with gestational diabetes find it disappears. Six weeks after giving birth you will be required to take another OGTT (oral glucose tolerance test) to ensure that your levels have returned to normal.

Your doctor will suggest that you have tests every 1-2 years as you have an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life. In future pregnancies you will be tested at around 16-18 weeks as there is a high chance of having gestational diabetes again.

If your levels are slightly elevated you will be retested at 24 weeks.

To reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes in the future try to maintain the healthy lifestyle. Studies have shown eating healthy and doing regular exercise can reduce your future risk by up to 58%.

Diabetic ‘Sweet Treats’ and Snack Ideas

Who says diabetics can’t enjoy sweets? Of course they can! It's just a matter of choosing the right sweet treat. Here are a few treats that diabetics can enjoy to make their lives sweeter.

Greek Yogurt

Forget about your frozen yogurt treats with sugar-laden chocolate and crushed cookies on top. Instead, make it healthier. Look for a natural Greek yogurt and add some nutritious, healthy toppings of your own. For example, try chopped nuts and of course fresh fruit.

Yogurt contains trace minerals, B vitamins and calcium and if you choose natural Greek yogurt, you can benefit from the probiotics it contains. Probiotics are essential for gut health and the immune system. Nuts contain fiber and complex carbs that won't cause blood sugar spikes. These nuts are also good sources of several B vitamins, zinc, magnesium, copper and potassium.

Fruity Ice Pops

You can make ice pops from almost all types of fruits and they're super simple to make. Just place your chosen fruits into your blender and then pour into popsicle molds and freeze. Fruit is sweet, and if you make your own, you'll be sure that there are no added sugars. The key here is to choose fruits that are already naturally sweet!

To make a different ice pop treat, add some Greek yoghurt to your fruit before pouring into the molds. These will be like having a frozen fruity yogurt or a creamy style ice-cream pop. Either way, your taste buds will enjoy the change.

Cookies with Barley Flakes

This is another home-made treat, but this one needs a bit more time to prepare as you'll need to bake the cookies. Enjoying a cookie or two without harming your blood sugar levels is worth the extra time.

Your ingredients for this recipe include dried apricots, hazelnuts, sunflower seeds, dried dates and barley flakes. Dried fruits contain a higher ratio of sugar, compared to the natural fruit, so watch quantities. You'll also need wheat flour, baking soda, canola oil and apple juice. Again, choose unsweetened apple juice.

Mix the apple juice with the canola oil and then pour into your dry mixture. Stir until all the ingredients have been moistened. Next place small spoonfuls onto a tray and bake. Bake for approximately ten minutes or until the biscuits turn golden brown.

Remember to limit your sweet treats to just one (or 2 if they're really little), rather than a handful. Just because these biscuits are not full of sugar, it doesn't mean they're ultra-healthy or that you can binge.

Snack Ideas

A great snack to grab when you need it, that won't hurt your blood sugar levels as it's low GI, is a cracker with peanut butter. If you love peanut butter, this little snack will become a handy snack treat.

Another great snack is a dip made with avocado. Use celery or carrot sticks and dip them into your homemade avocado dip!

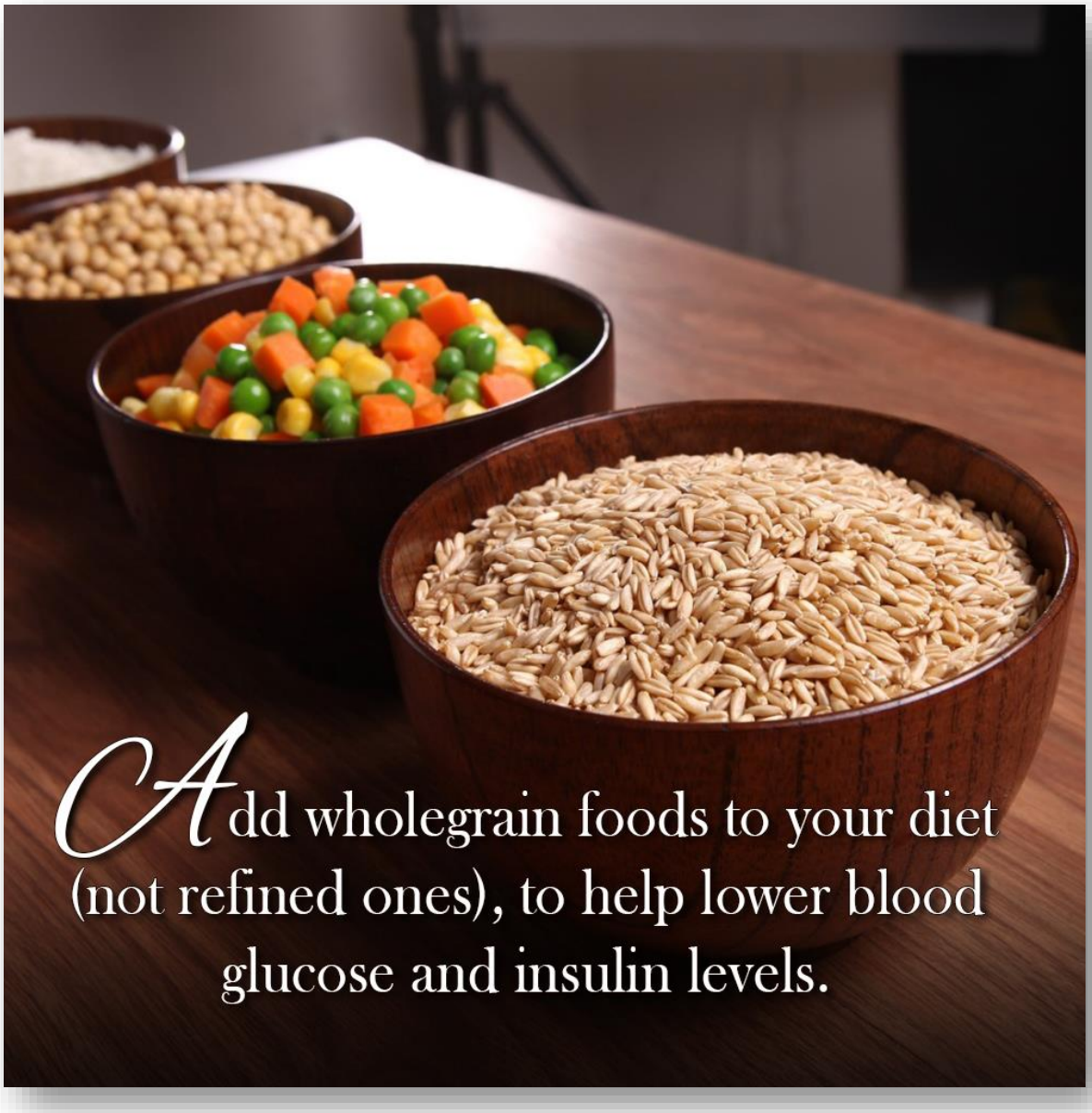
You can always enjoy a piece of fruit and/or small handful of nuts too.

These are just a few homemade sweet treats and snacks that diabetics can enjoy. Always remember that whenever you want to indulge in something sweet go for one that contains less carbs and less sugar.

Focus more on sweets that are rich in fiber and nutrients. There are plenty of treats you can purchase for diabetics, you just have to read labels and look a bit harder.

Can You Prevent or Reverse Type 2 Diabetes with Whole Foods?

Whole foods have been proven to both prevent and reverse the effects of diabetes. Whole foods are foods that are not processed or refined, or only both as little as possible, and contain no artificial additives.



Whole foods are not only good for you but they can help to prevent diseases and give you the precious nutrients that can be missed or stripped out of processed foods.

Most processed foods contain additives or hidden extras including fats, colorings, flavors, sodium (salts) and sugars. Whole foods are mostly all natural and some examples of these include fresh fruits and vegetables, wholegrains, beans and legumes and fresh herbs.

Fortunately type 2 diabetes is not only preventable but also largely reversible. A whole foods diet and regular exercise combined can greatly impact diabetes and help to undo the condition, as well as reduce your chances if you have not yet been diagnosed.

Making the switch to wholegrain foods instead of refined grains has been connected with helping lower blood glucose and insulin levels after consumption of these foods.

Make The Switch to Wholegrain Foods

Swapping out processed foods for whole foods can be tricky at the start although with proper recipes and a little bit of preparation and cooking they prove to be more delicious than takeout or highly processed foods.

Simple swaps like exchanging a bag of potato chips/crisps for a baked potato with fresh toppings or swapping a soft serve ice cream for a homemade healthy fruit smoothie is all it takes to implement a whole foods diet.

There are vital phytochemicals that are stripped from foods when they are processed. These phytochemicals are found in foods like blueberries and are used to help break down fats and reduce cholesterol. These are important as they help to reduce the risk of obesity or weight gain which can lead to type 2 diabetes.

Good fats are still needed in your diet, including omega-3s and monounsaturated fats from plant based foods. The fats to stay away from are trans and saturated fats.

Soluble Fiber

Fiber is another dietary material that is widely used in the body and found naturally in various foods. Fiber is essential for the body as it helps to keep the digestive tract moving healthily. Another plus about fiber is that it can help to fight heart disease and diabetes.

There are 3 different types of fiber which have different functions in the body. Soluble fiber is the main fiber that is best for diabetics as it traps sugars, allowing it to enter the blood more slowly, which helps to control blood sugar levels. This fiber is abundant in many fruits, vegetables, seeds, grains and legumes which are all wholefoods.

Protein Foods

Protein rich foods contain little or no carbohydrates to affect blood sugars, and can also help to slow down the absorption of sugars in carbs consumed at the same time. Good sources are ‘no added hormone’ or organic meats and foods including chicken, eggs, and grass-fed beef.

Nutrients

Magnesium is an element that is essential for the body and found in many whole foods. Without this vital element our bodies would have no energy, our muscles would not function properly and our cholesterol levels would be out of our control. Foods rich in magnesium including almonds and spinach can also help to metabolize glucose in the body.

Another healthy nutrient for the body is chromium. Chromium is found in foods like broccoli, garlic and grass-fed beef. This nutrient helps to balance blood

sugars, improve glucose tolerance and support a healthy metabolism and energy levels.

Solid food is not the only whole food that you need to worry about. Your beverages are also important. Sugar-free options, fresh fruit or vegetable juice and water are better consumed instead of soft drinks and flavored milks.

Hot drinks including tea made from fresh tea leaves can also be sweetened naturally with organic honey, although only a little as it is high in sugar. Alcohol is to be avoided as it is highly processed and not good for your health.

A wholefood diet is the perfect way to help prevent and reverse type 2 diabetes as it contains so many vital nutrients and foods containing antioxidants that are essential for a healthy lifestyle.

Talking to your dietician or healthcare provider before starting any new diets is highly recommended.

Conclusion

Some of the diets included in this eBook are endorsed or approved by diabetes associations. All the diets have given success to a great many diabetics and pre-diabetes sufferers.

They were not necessarily designed or created for diabetics, yet their healthy inclusions and the avoidance of foods that add to glucose loads makes them an obvious good fit.

If you are a diagnosed diabetic or pre-diabetic, or concerned that your lifestyle could be steering you that way, the only time to start taking action is now. To ensure a happy, healthy future, don't delay. This guide, if followed, can get you started.

Add in some exercise and get on the road to health and wellbeing.