



Enjoyable Eating with Diabetes:



Part 1

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Enjoyable Eating with Diabetes

Food is a big part of our lives. Having Type 1 Diabetes can often put more focus on food. We are here to support you, and to make sure that living with diabetes does not interfere with having a healthy relationship with food. It is about looking after both body and feelings.

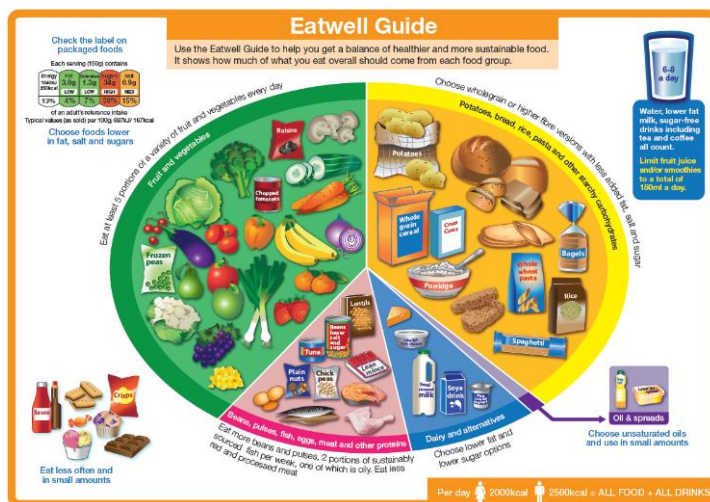
Eating well keeps your child's body healthy and supports growth, as well as helping to manage blood glucose levels.

The nutritional needs of children with diabetes are no different to those without diabetes. Food also means much more to us than just fuel and nutrients: It is also about enjoyment, family time, social and special occasions. Diabetes can fit alongside all of this.



Healthy Eating Patterns

Support your child in learning about healthy eating patterns and a good quality, nutritious diet overall.



There are lots of ways to achieve healthy eating patterns with different combinations of foods.

The key is variety, including some foods from each food group on the Eatwell Guide every day.

There is no one essential food that your child must eat, and no need to avoid any food or food group, although Sugary drinks are likely to cause a sharp rise (spike) in blood glucose levels.

We encourage you to think of 'everyday' foods and 'sometimes' foods rather than labelling foods as good/bad.



We appreciate that living with diabetes may influence you and your child's relationship with food, but we find the recommendations for enjoyable eating with diabetes are very similar to those we offer to all families.

‘Everyday’ foods and drinks:



Starchy food, including wholegrain where possible

Fruits, vegetables and salad

Aim for ‘five – a – day’

1 portion is the amount that fits into the palm of your hand, so is less for children than adults



Dairy foods (milk, cheese, yogurt) or non-dairy calcium-enriched alternatives, including low fat options

Beans, pulses, nuts, eggs, chicken, lean meat, fish and other proteins (with oily fish such as mackerel, fresh tuna, salmon or pilchards once a week, as these have added health benefits).



Water, tea/coffee without sugar, herbal teas

Pure fruit juice or smoothie – once a day with food

Sugar free cordial, Diet/zero drinks without caffeine

(be aware that these still contain chemicals such as sweeteners and preservatives, and their acidity can damage teeth enamel especially if you drink these between meals).

‘Sometimes’ foods and drinks

‘Sometimes’ foods are processed and/or contain a lot of fat, sugar or salt, such as:

- take-away and ready meals
- biscuits and cakes
- sweets and chocolate
- crisps, fried foods
- ready-made sauces
- fizzy drinks with sugar/caffeine
- salt added to/sprinkled onto foods



Rather than completely restricting these foods, it is more about when they are eaten and how much. They are part of a healthy, varied balanced diet when eaten ‘sometimes’ and in moderate amounts. Any sweet foods are best eaten at the end of a meal - they will raise blood sugars less at this time than if they are eaten on their own.

Parents can model eating ‘sometimes’ foods in moderation, without talking about ‘bad’ foods or feeling guilty.

If your child and family are not so used to following healthy eating patterns, gradually encourage small changes. When the whole family adopts healthy eating patterns, your child living with diabetes won’t feel different or deprived.

The most important thing is that you and your child enjoy food and eating together.

Establishing healthy habits and attitudes in childhood leads to healthier adult lifestyles.



Our top tips

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- A black and white photograph showing the silhouettes of dining utensils and a plate. On the left are two forks of different sizes. In the center is a large, round plate. To the right of the plate is a knife, and on the far right is a spoon. The items are arranged vertically against a light background.

Snacks

Most children are used to having snacks. The majority of snacks usually eaten will need insulin, apart from 'carb-free' or very low carb snacks – see next page

Once living with diabetes, many families find it helpful to have larger meals and fewer snacks.

Speak to your diabetes team about snacks as the advice is individual, and likely to change as your child gets older and their insulin requirements change.



Snack Ideas, needing insulin unless otherwise advised

- Most fresh fruit / dried fruit, bowl of fruit salad (fresh /tinned in fruit juice)
- Low fat/sugar yoghurts or fromage frais, glass of milk
- Fruit bread, crumpet, ½ teacake or bagel, plain scone, toast, small sandwich, scotch pancakes
- Plain rice cakes, crackers/savoury biscuits
- 1-2 plain biscuits such as: rich tea, ginger biscuits, fig rolls
- Small bowl of wholegrain cereal and milk
- Peanut butter on toast

Enjoy choosing from a wide range of snacks and have crisps, chocolate, sweets, biscuits and cake sometimes rather than every day.

‘Carbohydrate free’ and very low carbohydrate snacks, not needing insulin:

There are different groups of ‘carbohydrate-free’ snacks:

Carbohydrate free and low in fat/protein. Enjoy these at any time:

- Home-made vegetable soup (with just vegetables and stock, avoid potatoes / sweet potatoes or other starchy vegetables)
- Carrot/pepper/celery/cucumber sticks, tomatoes or other salad
- Small portion of olives/gherkins/pickled onions
- Sugar-free jelly, sugar-free ice pop
- Water, tea/coffee without sugar (small amount of milk ok but not made fully with milk)



Very low carbohydrate snacks (less than 5g carbohydrate) - have as one snack between a meal:

- One small apricot/kiwi/plum/satsuma
- Small handful of blueberries or raspberries
- Small handful of plain nuts or seeds
- One breadstick
- A tablespoon of salsa, cottage cheese or hummus with veg sticks



Carbohydrate free but containing fat and/or protein:

Have small amounts, and as one snack per day only (insulin can be needed if more is eaten):

- Cheese (also try low fat options)
- meat/chicken/fish (e.g. ham slice, mini peperami, chicken pieces)
- egg (use a little milk for scrambled egg or omelette)



What about School?

It is fine to have either school meals or packed lunches.

The healthy eating patterns discussed above are the same for in and outside of school.

Some key points to remember are:

- Include carbohydrate food with the meal
- Ensure drinks are sugar free or low in sugar e.g. water, milk, sugar free squash
- Choose yoghurt, fruit or sugar free jelly more often than high sugar puddings.



Packed lunch ideas could be:

Carbohydrate food ideas	Add a protein source and vegetables to balance the meal:	Dessert ideas
Bagels, tortilla wraps, sliced bread, pita bread	tuna, mackerel, egg, salmon, beef, chicken, turkey or cheese fillings with salad	Low fat yoghurt Fromage frais Fresh fruit
Pasta or rice salads	tuna, mackerel, mixed beans, egg, salmon, beef, chicken, turkey or cheese fillings with salad or vegetables	Dried or tinned fruit Biscuit Mini muffin
Potatoes, bread	Vegetable, lentil/bean, meat, poultry soups	Custard pot Malt loaf Sugar free jelly

Choosing healthy options from the school menu:

- Opt for sandwiches, wraps, pasta dishes, curries and casseroles. Add some salad or vegetables to your plate.
- Limit higher fat choices such as burgers, pizza and chips to a maximum of 2 times a week

Many school meal providers are able to give nutritional information on their school dinners. Ask the school chef if this is available.

Foods labelled as 'diabetic'

These are not recommended because they are expensive, can cause diarrhoea due to containing bulk sweeteners such as Sorbitol, and are not carb-free. They are also not necessary.

Sweeteners (found in low sugar/sugar free foods and drinks, can be used in cooking):

These can be a useful alternative to added sugar.

Artificial sweeteners: these are chemicals used to sweeten foods without causing the same rise in blood glucose as sugar. There are many brands available e.g. *Canderel*, *Splenda*, *Sweetex*. They are available as tablets and powder and can be used in food/drinks and for cooking.



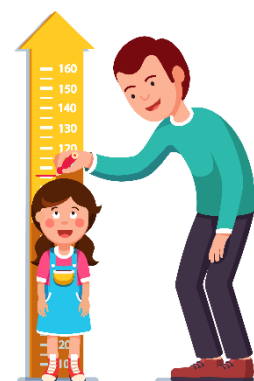
Stevia: This is a naturally sourced sweetener made from the stevia plant, e.g. *Truvia* and *Stevia*. It is 200–300 times sweeter than sucrose (sugar) and is heat stable, so can be used in cooking and baking.

Polyols: Try to avoid these if possible. They need to be carb counted. If you choose to consume these be aware that they can still affect blood glucose levels but not to the same extent as table sugar. Consuming large amounts of polyols can have a laxative effect, causing bloating, flatulence and diarrhoea. Examples include Sorbitol and Mannitol.

Checking height and weight

Your child's height and weight will be measured every 3 months. This is so we know they are growing well. Usually height and weight increase together and in proportion.

Around the time of diabetes diagnosis, it is common for the child to have lost weight. Once insulin is on board, their appetite will increase as the body is able to self-regulate again, and usually this weight is regained. These changes in appetite, weight and body shape can seem strange, and usually settle down as the diabetes becomes well managed. Talk to us if you have any concerns about this.



Vitamin D

This is mostly made in the body by the action of sunlight on our skin. However, many of us do not make enough for a range of reasons.

All children up to the age of 5 are recommended to have a daily multivitamin (containing vitamins A, C and D).



From 5 years on, all children including those with type one diabetes are recommended to have a vitamin D supplement (10 mcg/10µg) daily throughout the year, including in the winter months.

Useful Resources and Information on ‘Eating Well’:

Change4Life – NHS England:

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/about-change4life>

The British Dietetic Association Food Facts:

<https://www.bda.uk.com/food-health/food-facts.html>

British Nutrition Foundation:

<https://www.nutrition.org.uk/>

Digibete – a place to help young people and families to manage Type 1 Diabetes:

www.digibete.org

Mindful Eating - Derbyshire Healthy Future Service:

http://www.dchs.nhs.uk/assets/public/dchs/llb/tools/tools_1-11/3_DCHS_A5_4pp_Mindful_Eating.pdf

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