



# DIABETES *facts* SHEET

## Living well with diabetes: Healthy eating

Healthy eating is important for overall health and well being. If you eat the right amount of healthy foods, you are less likely to develop diabetes. Healthy eating also helps control blood sugar levels of people who have diabetes. Healthy eating means:

### **Choosing a variety of foods:**

Eat many different kinds of healthy foods like whole grains (for example, oatmeal and barley), fruits and vegetables, low fat milk products, and wild and lean meats.

### **Drinking more water:**

Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water every day.

### **Eating more foods that are high in fibre:**

Eat foods that have a lot of fibre in them, like whole grain breads and whole grain cereals, dried beans or canned beans, vegetables and fruit.

### **Eating smaller meals and snacks more often during the day:**

Be careful not to turn snacks into meals. Here are some healthy snack ideas:

- ◆ a piece of fruit and a small piece of low fat cheese
- ◆ vegetables and low fat dip
- ◆ a small bowl of soup
- ◆ yogurt
- ◆ a small piece of low fat cheese and a few whole wheat crackers.

Most people need 3 small meals and 2 to 3 healthy snacks every day. During the day, you should eat at least every 6 hours.

### **Eating less fast food, regular pop, chips and chocolate bars:**

Many fast foods have lots of hidden fat in them, so try to cut back on these foods. Drinking regular pop and too much juice between meals will make your blood sugars go up too high. Try eating healthy snacks like fruits and vegetables instead of chips and chocolate bars.

### **Eating less fat:**

If you eat a lot of high-fat foods, you might gain too much weight. This makes it harder for your body to control blood sugar levels.

### **Choose to eat these foods more often:**

- ◆ leaner meats (these can be store bought or traditional)
- ◆ vegetables and fruits
- ◆ whole grain breads and cereals
- ◆ low fat milk and yogurt.

### **Choose to eat these foods less often:**

- ◆ potato chips, cheezies
- ◆ balogna, hot-dogs
- ◆ butter, margarine, lard and oil
- ◆ chocolate bars or desserts.

For more information contact your health care provider.

### **What is diabetes?**

*Diabetes is a lifelong condition where your body does not produce enough insulin, or your body cannot use the insulin it produces. Your body needs insulin to change the sugar from food into energy.*

Aboriginal *Diabetes* Initiative

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For more information please visit [www.healthcanada.ca/diabetes](http://www.healthcanada.ca/diabetes)

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