

Healthy snacks

Eating the right balance of healthy foods can help you live well with diabetes. Snacks can help you meet your daily nutrition needs, but it's important to make healthy choices and watch your portions to manage your weight and blood glucose levels.

Carbohydrate-based snacks

If you are taking blood glucose lowering medications or insulin, you may need to eat a carbohydrate-based snack between meals and before going to bed to prevent low blood glucose levels (hypoglycaemia or a hypo). Talk to your dietitian or diabetes educator about whether you need to include snacks in your meal plan. The snacks below contain one carbohydrate exchange (approximately 15g of carbohydrate).

Fruit

- » Fresh fruit: one apple/pear/orange/large peach/large nectarine/small banana; three apricots/mandarins; two kiwifruit/plums; one cup of grapes/cherries/melon
- » Canned fruit in natural juice (drained): one cup of fruit salad/apricots/peaches
- » Dried fruit: one tablespoon of sultanas; six prunes; four whole dried apricots

Vegetables

- » ½ cup no-added-salt baked beans
- » One steamed cob of corn
- » Small can (125g) corn kernels

Dairy and alternatives

- » 100g of low-fat flavoured yoghurt or 200g of diet/natural/plain varieties. Flavoured natural yoghurt with passionfruit, fresh/frozen berries, one teaspoon of honey, nuts or seeds
- » 250ml of low-fat plain milk/soy milk with added calcium
- » Medium cappuccino/café latte/flat white coffee with low-fat milk/soy milk



Breads and cereals

- » One slice of dense grainy/seeded bread (plain or toasted) with a thin spread of margarine or avocado or low-fat ricotta or cottage cheese or hummus or chutney, with sliced tomato and sprouts
- » One thin slice of raisin/wholegrain fruit bread, fresh or toasted, with a thin spread of margarine or no-added-salt peanut butter/natural nut spread or 100% fruit jam
- » Half a wholegrain English muffin grilled with one slice of low-fat cheese and a sliced tomato
- » One small wholemeal pita pocket or wrap with grated carrot and grated low-fat cheese
- » Four rice/corn thins spread with a $\frac{1}{4}$ of an avocado and topped with sliced cucumber and tinned salmon
- » Ten plain wholegrain rice crackers with low-fat cream cheese or hummus or salsa
- » Two wholegrain crispbread with cottage cheese or avocado and tomato

Muesli and nut bars

Muesli and nut bars are a 'sometimes' snack as they can be high in kilojoules, added fat and sugar. Check the nutrition information panel to choose higher fibre/healthier options and eat these only occasionally.

Homemade snacks

Homemade snacks can be a healthy choice but they can still be high in kilojoules. Eat small portions of these only occasionally.

- » Cakes, biscuits, muffins and slices baked at home can be made healthier by using olive, canola, rice bran, grapeseed or sunflower margarines or oils; less sugar, wholemeal flour, oats, nuts, seeds and fruit.



Snacks low in carbohydrate

These snacks are good choices for people who want to include snacks without affecting their blood glucose levels. Try these ideas in the recommended portions:

Nuts and seeds

- » 30 grams (a small handful) of plain, raw unsalted nuts: mixed, macadamias, walnuts, almonds, cashews, brazil, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios
- » 30 grams (a small handful) of pumpkin or sunflower seeds

Salad and vegetables

- » Vegetable sticks: celery, carrot, capsicum, cucumber or snow peas with 1 slice (20g) of low-fat cheese or one tablespoon of hummus, tomato salsa or tzatziki yoghurt dip
- » Celery boats with two tablespoons of low-fat cream cheese or no-added-salt peanut butter
- » A handful of cherry tomatoes

Lean meat and alternatives

- » A mini can of tuna/salmon/sardines served in half a capsicum or a lettuce cup
- » A hard-boiled egg

Grains

- » One cup of air-popped popcorn served plain, or sprinkled with cinnamon/paprika/chilli

Fruit

Some fruits do not contain enough carbohydrate to impact on your blood glucose levels. They include:

- » Passionfruit
- » ½ cup of strawberries
- » ½ cup of raspberries or blackberries
- » One fresh fig

When shopping, try to limit buying foods that are high in saturated fat, sugar and salt (sodium), such as:

- sweet biscuits and some crackers
- cakes, muffins and slices
- pastries
- chocolates and confectionary
- potato crisps, corn chips and other salty snacks
- processed and pre-packaged snack foods
- fast foods and high fat takeaways.

Drinks

It's important to stay hydrated throughout the day. Water is the best drink, but some other alternatives include:

- » mineral or soda water flavoured with sliced lemon/lime/frozen berries/cucumber/fresh mint
- » black/oolong/green/herbal tea
- » coffee or decaffeinated coffee with a dash of skim or low-fat milk.

As an occasional substitute, diet cordial or diet soft drink may add variety without extra sugar or kilojoules.



More information

The booklet, *The healthy shopping guide – your essential supermarket companion*, can help you to make healthy snack choices. To order a copy, call **1300 136 588**.



The NDSS and you

The NDSS provides a range of services to help you manage your diabetes. These include our Infoline and website for advice on diabetes management, NDSS products and a range of support programs to help you learn more about managing your diabetes.

Published June 2016