

A supermarket shopping guide  
for people with

# Diabetes

Your questions answered



# Who is this booklet for?



While this booklet is mainly intended for people with diabetes, their families or carers, it is a healthy eating guide suitable for everyone. It is important for us all to be aware of different types of foods and how much of them we eat.

This booklet is intended to be a practical guide to help you follow a healthy lifestyle. The information provided is suitable for the whole family. We hope that the guide will make shopping easier, and more enjoyable, and help you in making healthier food choices.

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## **Disclaimer**

Our recipes contain nutritional information which should be used as a guide only. This is because of differences in ingredients that occur naturally, how you might cook the recipe yourself and the size of the portion you eat.

Nutritional analysis gives total carbohydrate for the ingredients used. Remember to look at total carbohydrate per serving, not just 'of which sugars'. If additional carbohydrate is taken or suggested to be served with, remember this must be added to the overall carbohydrate content of the meal. The nutritional information was calculated by a Diabetes Ireland dietitian using the Microdiet package.



# Diabetes explained



# What is diabetes?

Diabetes mellitus or diabetes, is a condition where the blood glucose sugar levels are too high. Glucose levels are controlled by the hormone insulin. People with diabetes either have a lack of insulin, or the insulin which is produced isn't working properly. This results in the body being unable to use the blood glucose as it should. There are many medical treatments for diabetes, but we must remember a healthy lifestyle is the backbone of all treatments.

## How prevalent is diabetes?

Worldwide, diabetes affects roughly 340 million people. Diabetes is more common in certain population groups – namely African, Caribbean and South Asian. There are approximately 225,000 people living with diabetes in Ireland, and many more living with the condition but do not yet know it (undiagnosed). Many more are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes unless they change to a more healthy lifestyle.



# What are the different types of diabetes?

## There are two main types of diabetes

**Type 1 diabetes** tends to occur in childhood or early adult life, and always requires treatment with insulin – either by injections, or pump therapy. Development of type 1 diabetes is unrelated to poor lifestyle habits. Type 1 diabetes is caused by the body's own immune system destroying the insulin-making cells (beta-cells) of the pancreas. The reason why this happens is unclear, but may include factors such as genetics, viral infection and the environment.

**Type 2 diabetes** usually develops slowly in adulthood, with risk increasing over the age of 40. It is progressive and can sometimes be treated with diet and exercise, but more often type 2 diabetes may require diabetes medications and/or insulin injections to keep the blood glucose under control.

Whether a person has type 1 or type 2 diabetes, a healthy balanced diet will help control the condition successfully in combination with regular activity, maintenance of a healthy body weight and taking medications as prescribed.

## When a person **without** diabetes eats a meal

The gastrointestinal tract breaks carbohydrate foods down into simple sugars called glucose, which it then absorbs. It also releases incretin hormones

1

2

The incretin hormones tell the pancreas to release insulin

Glucose travels through the blood vessels to the body's cells

3

4

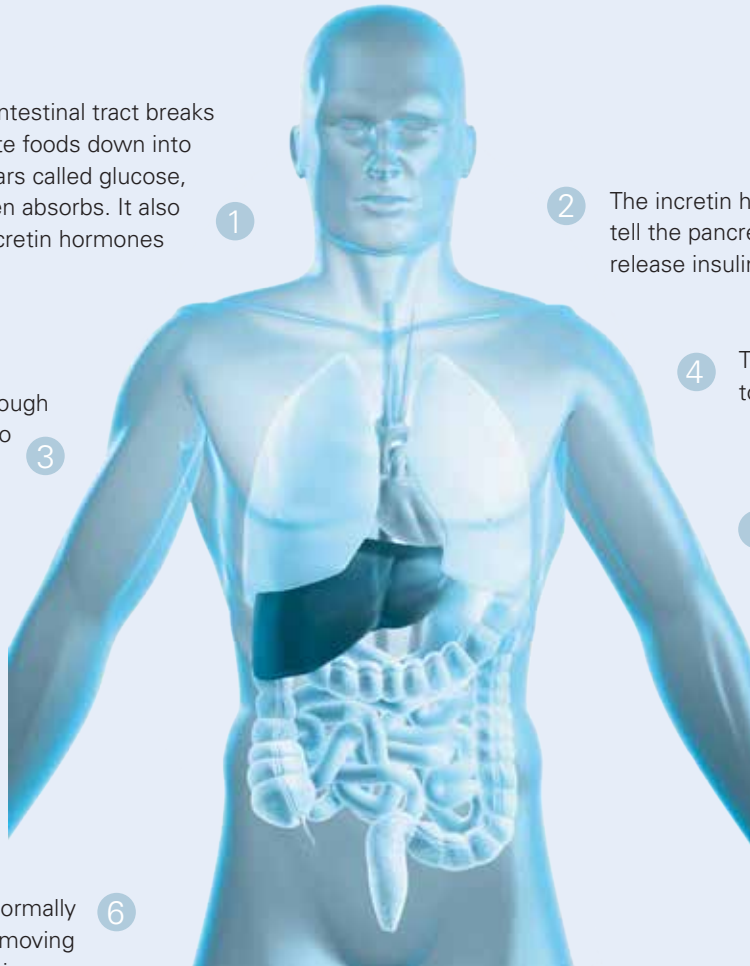
The body tells the liver to stop making glucose

5

Insulin helps glucose get into the cells

6

The kidneys function normally – filtering blood and removing waste. Normally the urine produced by the kidneys does not contain any glucose





## When a person **with** diabetes eats a meal

The gastrointestinal tract breaks carbohydrate foods down into simple sugars called glucose, which it then absorbs. There may be fewer incretin hormones to tell your pancreas to make insulin after a meal – and some of those hormones that send the message don't work as well

1

2

Your pancreas no longer makes enough insulin – so it works even harder to try to keep up

3

Too much glucose builds up in your blood

4

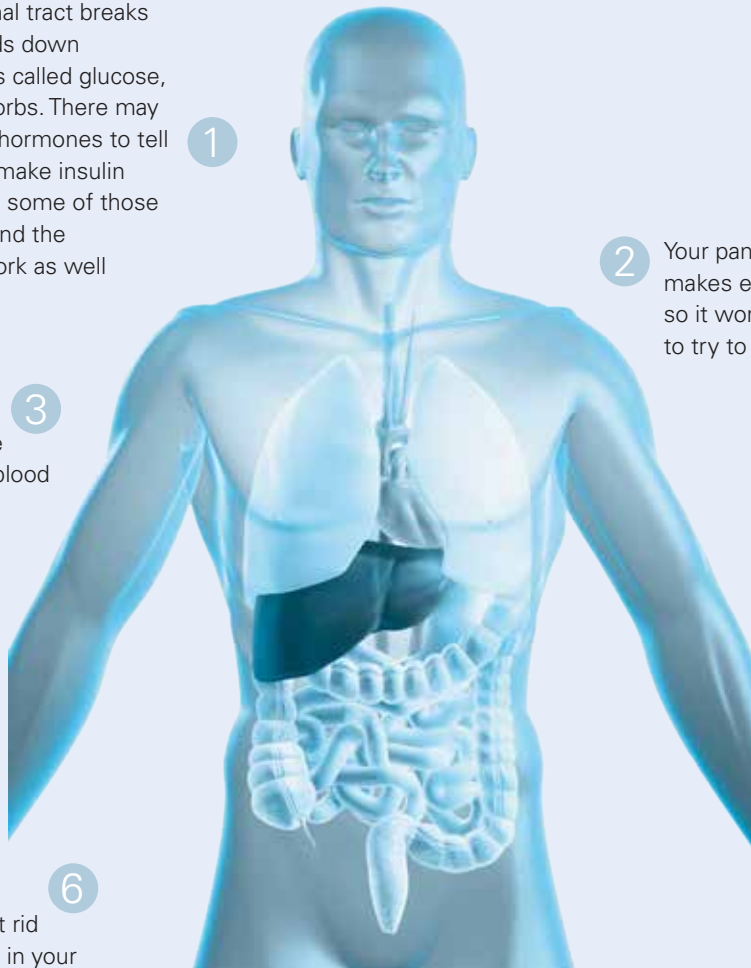
Your liver keeps making glucose

5

It's harder for glucose to enter your cells

6

Your kidneys try to get rid of the excess glucose in your blood. If there is too much glucose in the urine, you may urinate frequently and need to drink more fluids



## **Will my diabetes limit the types of food I can eat now?**

The ideal shopping list for a person with diabetes is the same as a shopping list for anyone wanting to eat a healthy balanced diet – that is mostly fresh unprocessed foods, which are low in fat and sugar, moderate in starchy carbohydrates, and high in fibre, vitamins and minerals.

### **An easy rule of thumb is ‘the less processed, the better’.**

A healthy diet contains a balance of the 3 main nutrients – proteins, fats and carbohydrates. Eating regular meals will make it easier for your body to control your blood glucose. Some treatments require attention to be paid to the timing of meals, whereas others are less strict – talk to your dietitian or diabetes care team to see how flexible you can be with your meal plans.

## **Why is seeing a dietitian important?**

Your dietitian, who should be a member of the Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute (INDI – see [www.indi.ie](http://www.indi.ie)) can give you individually tailored advice for your diabetes. He/she will take into account your medication, any additional medical conditions you may have, your weight, current dietary intake, among other factors. Your dietitian can guide you to make healthy food choices, educate around portion sizes of foods (especially carbohydrates), and answer any other diet related queries you have about your diabetes.

**Eating well can improve your blood glucose control, and reduces the risk of developing long-term complications associated with diabetes, such as heart disease.**

# Supermarket shopping—the ‘how to’



# Foods to look out for in the supermarket

Supermarket shopping can be an overwhelming task at the best of times, so when you've to think diabetes as well, the weekly shop can seem huge! Thankfully, this doesn't need to be the case – read on to learn how to make the most out of your visit to the supermarket.

Before you shop, write a list. Check what is already in your cupboard at home, and make a rough plan of ingredients you will need for meals for the week ahead. Some people find apps for smartphones useful for planning their shopping – examples are 'Mealboard', 'Pepperplate' and 'Food Planner App'. Planning ahead means you are more likely to fill up the trolley with foods you really need.

At the back of this booklet, you will find some meal suggestions, all of which are based on healthy food choices.

At the supermarket, you should find you shop by mostly using the perimeter of the store where the least processed food is available. Then still using your list, strategically tackle the centre aisles. Read on for more details!





# Usually, up first are the fruits & vegetables

Think about including fruit with cereal, as a snack, or after a meal. Choose from fresh, frozen, dried, or tinned (in fruit juice, not syrup). Vegetables can be steamed, roasted or made into salads – include a variety to keep your meals interesting.

To supplement your fresh purchases, stock up on frozen vegetables that are cut and ready to cook – frozen peas, green beans, and spinach will cook in just a few minutes. There's no excuse not to have vegetables with dinner!

Aim to eat at least 5 portions (in total) of fruits and vegetables daily. They are low in calories, and their fibre helps keep hunger at bay, and also slows down release of glucose into the blood stream, thus helping your diabetes control. Buying in season and availing of special offers will help to keep costs down.

**Remember, fruits contain naturally occurring sugars and may cause your blood glucose to rise if eaten in large amounts – so spread your fruit portions out across the day.**

## What's a portion?

- 1 medium sized fruit – an apple, orange, pear, small banana
- 2 small fruit e.g. kiwi, mandarin
- Small handful of small fruit e.g. grapes, berries
- 1 slice large fruit e.g. melon, pineapple
- 1 small glass fruit juice or fruit smoothie (100ml)
- 4 dessert spoons of cooked fresh fruit, fruit tinned in own juice or frozen fruit
- 4 dessert spoons cooked vegetables
- 1 small bowl of salad
- 1 bowl of homemade vegetable soup



## The bakery

Even local supermarkets, tend to have displays of baked goods, cleverly placed to tempt you. This is where your shopping list can be your secret weapon!

Stock up on starchy carbohydrates. Starchy carbohydrates include all types of breads and crackers, cereals, potatoes, pasta, rice and noodles. These foods should be included at each meal.

Choosing oat based and wholegrain varieties of starchy carbohydrates will help increase the fibre content of your diet, which in turn can help towards maintaining a healthy gut.

### Choose:

- Wholegrain breads
- Wholegrain cereals
- Wholemeal or seeded pitta pockets/ wraps/bagels.
- Oatcakes, wholegrain crackers
- 'Kids' size wraps



Foods based on oats and wholegrains are released more slowly into our bloodstream, improving blood glucose control.

**Remember: the total amount of carbohydrate you eat is important too – see the food pyramid on the back cover of this booklet and nutrition factsheets at [www.indi.ie](http://www.indi.ie) for guidance on portion sizes.**

# Don't forget dairy

Dairy foods contain the naturally occurring sugar lactose.

To meet your calcium needs and keep bones healthy, aim for 3 servings of dairy per day. Women who are pregnant or breast feeding also need 3 servings daily, whereas children aged 9-18 need 5 servings a day.

Choose low fat milk. Low fat milk has the vitamins and minerals we need for bone health, but does not have the saturated fat which can raise cholesterol. Low fat milk is suitable for children over the age of 2, and skimmed milk is suitable for children over the age of 5.

## Top tips:

- Choose low fat or skimmed milks
- Look for reduced fat cheese
- Know your portion sizes – see the food pyramid on the back cover flap
- Try not to buy too much – even the reduced fat varieties of cheese have a significant fat content
- Choose yoghurts which say diet, 'fat free', 0% or natural. These are low in fat and sugar, and have little effect on blood glucose



# Meat Counter

Meat and poultry are protein foods, so don't affect blood glucose. Choose lean cuts of meats to reduce saturated fat intake. Ask your butcher to trim excess fat and skin off your meat and poultry. Cheaper cuts of meat are a budget shopper's friend – they are ideal for soups, stews and casseroles. Ask your butcher for advice.

Sausages and puddings have a high fat content – even when grilled, so keep these foods for occasional treats.

Remember that stuffing or sauce will have a lot of salt, and usually some carbohydrate too, so go for plain undressed meat or poultry and have a small amount of sauce on the side if desired.



## Find the fish

Oily fish like salmon, trout and mackerel are rich in heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids. People with type 2 diabetes are recommended to have oily fish twice a week. Cod, hake, plaice are all healthy options too, so try and include these fish once as week as well.

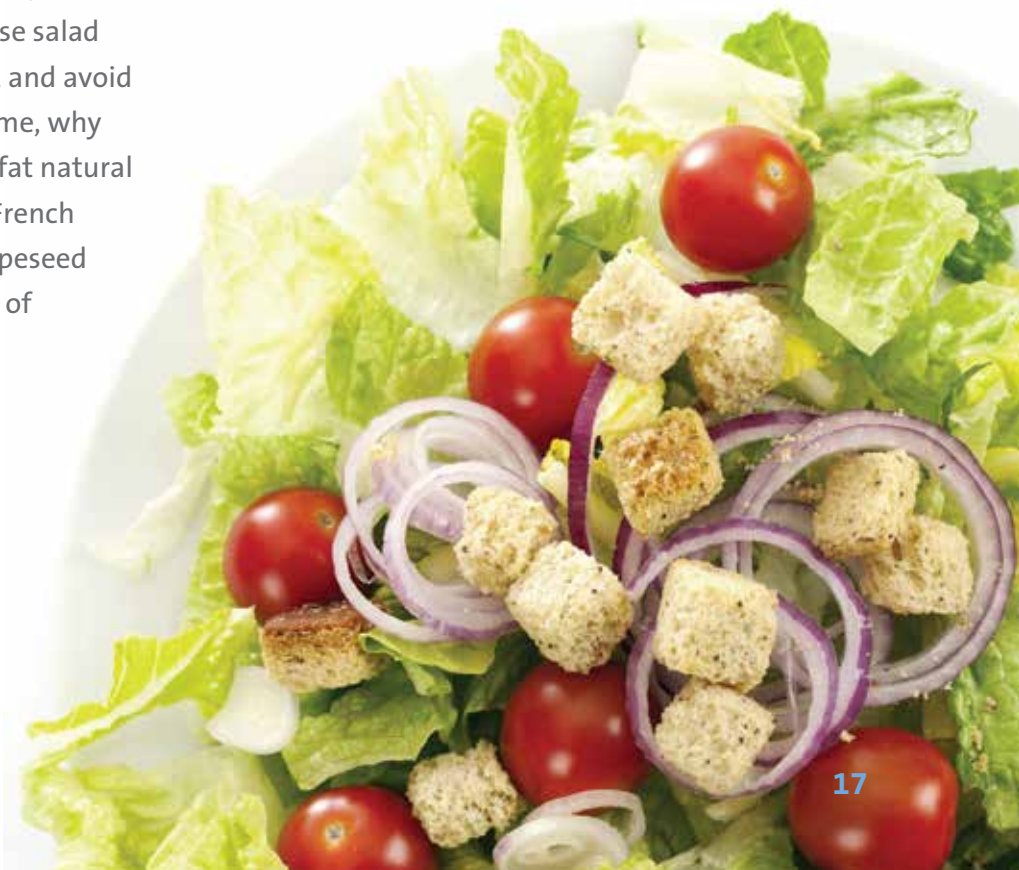
Many supermarkets now stock uncoated frozen fish – look for fish fillets without breadcrumb or batter coatings. See recipe ideas at [www.diabetes.ie](http://www.diabetes.ie) if you need help with meal ideas!

And, keep a supply of tinned salmon, tuna, mackerel or sardines in your cupboard to use as the basis of a quick and tasty healthy meal. When choosing tinned fish opt for ones tinned in water, brine or tomato sauce instead of oil or mayonnaise.



## **Salad bar and Deli counters**

These are a minefield! Salads are often dressed in either mayonnaise or vinaigrette, and tend to be high in calories. Try to choose salad without dressing where possible, and avoid potato salad and coleslaw. At home, why not try dressings made with low fat natural yoghurt, lemon juice and herbs, French vinaigrette made with olive or rapeseed oil, or simply use a small amount of balsamic vinegar to jazz up a green salad.



# Drinks

It is recommended to drink up to 2 litres (close to 4 pints) of fluid daily.

- Drinks such as water, coffee, tea, and herbal teas are all fine, but do not add sugar. Artificial sweeteners can also be used in foods and drinks – they won't raise blood glucose. Examples are Canderel, Hermesetas, Stevia, Splenda, and many supermarkets now have their own brand versions which are also suitable.
- Avoid high sugar drinks such as fizzy drinks, energy and sports drinks. Fizzy drinks labelled Diet, Zero and Free, and no added sugar squash are suitable alternatives.

**Fruit juice and fruit smoothies are concentrated sources of natural sugars, so need to be used sparingly as they can have a significant impact on our blood glucose. The suggested serving size is 100ml, and preferably these drinks should be taken at mealtimes.**



## Do I need to limit my caffeine intake?

The main sources of caffeine are coffee, tea, cola drinks, and energy drinks. Smaller amounts are found in chocolate and chocolate flavoured desserts. And, some oral medications may contain caffeine too – cold and flu tablets, pain relief tablets, anti-histamines, and diuretics (water tablets).

Caffeine only appears to cause problems if a large amount is taken. So having only a few cups of tea or coffee each day, generally should not be harmful.





# What about treat foods?

Treat foods often are high in fat and sugary carbohydrates. Sugary carbohydrates release glucose into our blood stream quickly. These foods – buns, biscuits, cakes, chocolate, sweets, jellies, jam, marshmallows, and fizzy drinks are low in other nutrients, and can add to weight gain.

Plan to include ‘treat’ foods such as low calorie hot chocolate drinks, diet yoghurts, popcorn, sugar free jelly or maybe individually wrapped ‘fun size’ bars or ice pops along with the rest of your weekly shop. Including these food items in moderation is all part of healthy eating. Making a plan as to what you are going to buy, and when you are likely to eat/drink it over the week will reduce the chances of impulse purchases which you may regret once you get home!



## What about special ‘diabetic’ foods such as chocolates and jams?

Special ‘diabetic’ chocolates, biscuits and jams are of no real benefit, and usually contain high amounts of fat and sorbitol (a sweetener which can have a laxative effect and cause an upset tummy). These foods also tend to be more expensive.

The dietary advice for people with diabetes has changed over the years. Today, the most important message for people with diabetes is to eat healthily, in the same way that is recommended for the whole population. A balanced diet is based on a moderate amount of starchy foods, at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables daily and low intakes of fat, sugar and salt. This means that small amounts of sugar or sugar containing foods can be eaten occasionally and preferably as part of a meal.

**Look at the ingredients list for other names for sugar such as glucose, honey, dextrose, fructose, syrups, lactose, maltose, hydrolysed starch, treacle, molasses.**





Once you've been around the perimeter of the shop, add to your trolley from the middle aisles. Items such as pasta and tinned tomatoes, beans and tuna can be the makings of a quick and healthy midweek meal and are key store cupboard ingredients. Keep referring back to your shopping list. This way you are less likely to be distracted by special offers and less healthy food choices.

**Top tip: if you don't need to go into a particular aisle, bypass it!**



### Stock up on basic store-cupboard foods

- Wholegrain cereals
- Porridge oats
- Pasta/spaghetti/couscous/rice
- Pitta pockets (store in freezer)
- Eggs
- Tinned tomatoes
- Tomato puree
- Frozen vegetables
- Baked beans
- Tinned fish – mackerel, sardines, salmon, tuna
- Pulses – lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans or butter beans
- Fruit tinned in natural juice
- Sugar free jelly
- Stock cubes (look for reduced salt varieties)
- Low fat/fat free salad dressing
- Mixed herbs
- Artificial sweetener
- No added sugar squash/cordial
- Olive or rapeseed oil
- Seeds such as linseed, flaxseed, pumpkin, sesame or sunflower
- Nuts e.g. almonds, walnuts, cashew, peanuts – choose plain unsalted varieties



Look at the swop list below to see how it all fits together.

## Healthy options

Instead of...	Go for...
Breaded or crumbed chicken	Skinless chicken or turkey
Fatty meats	Meat with little visible fat
Battered fish	Plain fish without coating, tinned fish
White bread	Wholegrain breads
Cream crackers	Oat cakes, rye crackers
Sugary cereals	Porridge, or oat and wholegrain based cereals
Full fat milk	Low fat, or skimmed milk
Yoghurt	Plain, natural, diet or 0%
Butter	Oil-based spread or reduced fat spread
Mayonnaise	Low fat or extra light mayonnaise or relish or chutney
Salads made with mayonnaise	Plain salads or those dressed with vinaigrette
Crisps	Popcorn, rice cakes, baked crisps
Sugary drinks	Sugar free squash, water, fizzy drinks labelled diet, free or zero
Sugar, honey, syrup, treacle	Sweetener such as canderel, hermesetas, splenda, stevia

# Dietary considerations—salt, alcohol, food labels



Healthy eating for diabetes requires us to be mindful of nutritional content, labelling and health claims made by various foods and drinks. This section explores these considerations further.

## **What about the salt content of foods?**

Too much salt can contribute to high blood pressure and heart disease. On average Irish people eat over 10g salt per day which is almost double the recommended 6g per day. Whether it is rock salt, sea salt or table salt it will have the same effect, so most of us should reduce our salt intake.



### **Easy ways to do this are:**

- Reduce your intake of processed foods especially ready prepared meals, sauces and takeaways
- Choose fresh foods (fruit, vegetables, meats, fish) more often
- Use less salt when cooking and at the table
- Flavour food with alternatives – pepper, garlic, herbs, spices, vinegar, lemon juice
- Recognise salty food descriptors – food labelled as smoked, pickled, marinated in soya sauce will be high in salt
- Choose unsalted nuts and snacks
- Stock cubes, packet soups and instant gravy/sauces tend to be high in salt. Try to use less often, and when possible make your own instead.

# Facts about Fat

Fats occur naturally in foods and play an important role in our health.

Not all fats are the same – some are better for our health than others. Where possible, choose more of the ‘good’ fats and less of the ‘not so good’ fats.

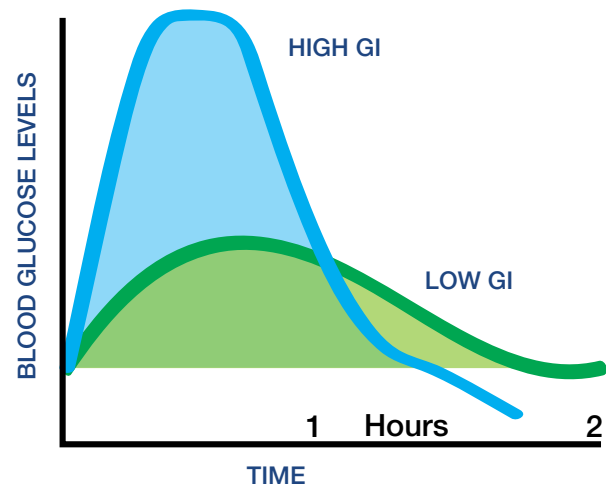
Saturated, hydrogenated and trans fat are the ‘not so good’ fats as they raise the harmful cholesterol in your blood which increases the risk of heart disease. These fats are found in butter, lard, cream, fat on meat, meat products such as black & white pudding and sausages, cakes, tarts, pies, take-away foods, crisps, chocolate, fudge and pastries.

Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are the ‘good’ fats as they lower the harmful cholesterol in your blood and are good for your heart. They are found in olive oil, rapeseed oil, sunflower oil, and spreads made from these oils. Other sources include nuts like walnuts and almonds and seeds such as sesame, pumpkin and sunflower.



# What is glycaemic index?

The Glycaemic Index (GI) is a measure of how quickly your blood glucose levels rise in the time after eating a single food. For simplicity we rank foods, depending on the speed of their effect on blood glucose, as low medium or high GI.



## Simple ways to include low GI foods:

- Choose wholegrain or oat based breads and cereals
- Have a piece of fruit as a snack between meals or after a meal
- Add beans, lentils or chick-peas to salads, soups or stews
- Include vegetables or salad at your meals.

As a general rule, refined sugars/processed foods have a high GI and release glucose into the bloodstream quickly. Whereas fruits, vegetables, and high fibre foods like oats, bran and whole grains have a low GI and release slowly.

Glycaemic Load refers to the effect of a meal, rather than an individual food on our blood glucose. The principal is easy to apply – choosing high fibre carbohydrates more often, and being aware of both portion sizes and sources of carbohydrates at mealtimes. This will all help to manage our blood glucose levels.





# What about alcohol?

Like everything else, it is fine to enjoy alcohol in moderation. Ask your diabetes care team how alcohol may affect your blood glucose levels.

Everyone should have a minimum of 3 alcohol free days per week. Try not to have more than 5 standard drinks at one time. For low risk drinking, the weekly limits are:

- Up to 11 standard drinks a week for women
- Up to 17 standard drinks a week for men

**Aim to have no more than 2-3 drinks on 2-3 days of the week**

- Choose fizzy drinks labelled diet, light, zero or slimline as a mixer for spirits
- Avoid 'alcopops', liqueurs and cocktails
- Avoid low sugar beers as they tend to be high in alcohol
- Never drink alcohol on an empty stomach



Alcohol is high in calories, but doesn't provide any nourishment. Drinking more than the weekly limit can increase your weight, and your blood pressure and put you at increased risk of heart disease and stroke. It can also damage your liver and increase your chances of certain types of cancer.



1 pint beer/stout	=	2 standard drinks
1 pub measure e.g. vodka, brandy	=	1 standard drink
1 glass beer/ lager	=	1 standard drink
1 small glass wine (100mls)	=	1 standard drink
1 small bottle wine (187mls)	=	2 standard drinks
1 bottle wine	=	7-10 standard drinks

# Food labels

Food labelling gives us valuable information.

It shows us:

1. The ingredients list, which is listed in order of weight – so the main ingredient comes first
2. The food label – presented as a table

Use this table to check how much fat, sugar and salt is in your food.



	Sugars	Fat	Saturated Fat	Salt
<b>HIGH</b> (per 100g)	Over 15g	Over 20g	Over 5g	Over 1.5g
<b>MEDIUM</b> (per 100g)	Between 5g – 15g	Between 3g – 20g	Between 1.5g – 5g	Between 0.3g - 1.5g
<b>LOW</b> (per 100g)	5g and less	3g and less	1.5g and less	0.3g and less



You may have noticed there is a traffic light label on the front of some of the products you buy. This tells you at a glance if the food has high, medium or low amounts of sugars, fat, saturates and salt.

- Red means high—enjoy once in a while
- Amber means medium—ok most of the time
- Green means low—go for it

In short, the more Green lights, the healthier the choice.

Everybody should choose foods which are lower in sugars, fats and salt.

With diabetes, remember it isn't just about the amount of sugar on the label. You also need to be aware of the total carbohydrate content of the foods you choose.

Practice how to read a food label at home. At the supermarket, be selective – you don't need to examine every label on one day! More information on food labelling can be found at [www.diabetes.ie](http://www.diabetes.ie)



## Health claims

- **‘Sugar-free’** and **‘reduced sugar’** do not mean carbohydrate-free, so check the ingredients for other forms of sugar – honey, glucose, dextrose, fructose, syrups, lactose, maltose, hydrolysed starch, treacle, molasses.
- A **reduced-fat** food has less fat than the regular version, but it still has a high fat content e.g. mayonnaise or cheese. Reduced-fat foods often also contain added carbohydrate or salt to improve their taste. Compare the label against the ordinary version of the product to check differences.
- **‘No added sugars’** means that no sugar has been added to the product. However, check the ingredients for other forms of sugar
- Labels stating **‘contains natural sugars’** can be misleading. This product may contain fruit juice, or honey, so if unsure always check the carbohydrate content of the label.



# Shopping on a budget

## **I am shopping on a budget – how can I reduce my shopping bill?**

- Make a weekly plan and stick to your shopping list.
- Look at the shelves higher up and lower down – these are where the lesser known brands and own brands tend to be stored.
- In the fresh food sections there is always a particular spot where reduced items are put. These foods are coming to the end of their 'best before' or 'use by' dates, but are perfectly good to eat. Make sure to heed the label for advice on consumption.
- Value offers – 'buy one, get second at half price' or 'buy one get one free'. These offers are really only true value if they fit in with your shopping list, and are things you really need. If they do, buy and store some for future use.
- Sign up to receive supermarket special offers by email. You can check in advance if the upcoming offers suit your needs.



## **Last but not least – never shop on an empty stomach!**

When you're hungry, foods you might not ordinarily consider can be very tempting. Supermarkets that bake in the store are particularly challenging. So be sure to shop after a meal or snack when you're less likely to be tempted!





# Meal planning and recipe ideas



**So now you have some idea what you should eat and drink, let's put it all together and come up with some meal suggestions.**

## Breakfast Ideas

- Branflakes, low fat milk and a small banana or glass of orange juice
- Grapefruit segments, boiled egg and wholemeal toast with low fat spread
- Porridge with 1 dessert spoon of sultanas and a low fat no added sugar yoghurt
- Shredded wheat and strawberries (if in season), low fat milk and a natural yoghurt
- Weetabix and low fat milk, Ryvitas and reduced sugar marmalade
- Poached egg and grilled tomato, wholegrain or oat-based toast and a low fat spread
- Oatibix, a kiwi and low fat milk, Cracker-bread/Cracottes and a low fat spread



## Lunch Ideas

- Homemade vegetable soup, wholegrain bread, low fat cheese and an apple
- Pitta bread sandwich made with tuna, sweet-corn and a teaspoon low fat mayonnaise, and a slice of melon to finish
- Pasta with chicken and tomato sauce made with tinned chopped tomatoes, salad\* and a natural yoghurt dressing
- Baked beans on toasted granary bread and a pear
- Egg omelette, a small bagel and a salad
- Sardines, tomatoes, wholegrain or oat-based bread and an orange
- Grilled rashers and mushrooms, potato waffle and peach/nectarine (if in season)

\* Salad suggestion: Lettuce, tomato, cucumber, onion and grated carrot





# Dinner Ideas

- Lean grilled pork chop and apple sauce, carrots and mashed potatoes.
- Roast lamb, broccoli and cauliflower, a baked potato and low fat gravy.
- Baked cod/haddock with lemon juice and black pepper, couscous with frozen peas and chopped mixed peppers.
- Stir-fried chicken with vegetables and wholegrain rice.
- Salmon marinated for 1/2 hour in orange juice, garlic and reduced salt soy sauce, then baked, served with noodles and frozen peas.
- Chicken and vegetable casserole, with steamed or boiled potatoes.
- Chilli Con Carne with pasta and a side salad.





## Snack ideas

- Fresh fruit
- Diet or 0% fat yoghurt
- Crispbread/rice cakes or oat crackers with tomato/cucumber/small serving low fat cheese spread
- Small wholemeal scone with low fat spread
- Small bowl cereal with low fat milk
- Plain biscuits such as 1 Digestive/Fig Roll, 2 Rich Tea/Marietta/Gingernut (do not have as a snack more than once daily and limit to occasionally if trying to lose weight)

**NOTE: Although these foods are healthy choices it is important to reduce portion size if you need to lose weight. See the food pyramid at the back of this booklet for more information on portion sizes.**



# Baked potato with various fillings (Serves 1)

## For baked potato

1 baking potato (approx weight 180g)

## Method

Wash the potato and pierce with a sharp knife several times on all sides.

Dry the potato well with kitchen paper and place on a microwave-safe plate.

Place in the microwave and cook on full power for four minutes.

Remove the plate using oven gloves and turn the potato over. Dry the potato and the plate

and put back into the microwave. This step is important in order to create a crispy skin.

Heat on full power for a further four minutes.

Remove the plate and leave the potato to stand for 1-2 minutes, as it will continue to cook during this time.

Check that the potato is soft by pushing a sharp knife into the centre. Return to the microwave for another 30 seconds if it is still uncooked.



### Filling—Tuna & Sweetcorn

#### Ingredients

1 baking potato

90g tuna, canned in brine and drained

90g sweetcorn, canned in water, and drained

1 tbsp reduced fat mayonnaise

#### Method

While potato is cooking, prepare the filling.

Mix together tuna and reduced fat mayonnaise and add the sweetcorn.

To serve, simply cut a cross in the baked potato, and fill with the tuna sweetcorn mixture.

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	483
Protein (g)	31.3
Carbohydrate (g)	80.9
Of which sugars (g)	11.0
Total fat (g)	6.1
Saturated fat (g)	1.0
Fibre (g)	5.9
Sodium (mg)	686
Salt equivalent (g)	1.7

### Filling—baked beans, cheese and a side salad

#### Ingredients

1 baking potato

135g baked beans (individual serving pot, or 1/3 of standard tin)

30g reduced fat cheese, grated

5 cherry tomatoes

Handful of lettuce leaves

#### Method

Cook potato as previously outlined on page 42.

Gently heat the baked beans. When potato is cooked, pour beans into centre, and top with grated cheese. Serve alongside the lettuce and tomatoes.

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	457
Protein (g)	24.7
Carbohydrate (g)	80.3
Of which sugars (g)	12.7
Total fat (g)	6.4
Saturated fat (g)	3.2
Fibre (g)	12.2
Sodium (mg)	949
Salt equivalent (g)	2.3

**Filling—creamy garlic mushrooms**

- 1 baking potato
- 60g mushrooms, wiped clean and quartered
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 30g low fat cream cheese

**Method**

Cook potato as previously outlined on page 42.

Heat oil in a pan, and sauté the mushrooms and garlic over a low heat until the mushrooms are coloured and release some liquid. Stir through the cream cheese. When potato is cooked, just place the mushroom filling on top.

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	322
Protein (g)	12.8
Carbohydrate (g)	58.8
Of which sugars (g)	3.4
Total fat (g)	6.1
Saturated fat (g)	2.1
Fibre (g)	5.1
Sodium (mg)	156
Salt equivalent (g)	0.39





# Red lentil and carrot soup (Serves 4)

## Ingredients

200g dried red lentils, uncooked  
300g carrots, peeled and chopped into cubes  
1 medium onion, peeled and diced  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1000ml vegetable stock  
1 level tsp ground coriander  
1 level tsp ground ginger

## Method

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan, and over a low heat sauté the onion and carrots until the onion is turning translucent.

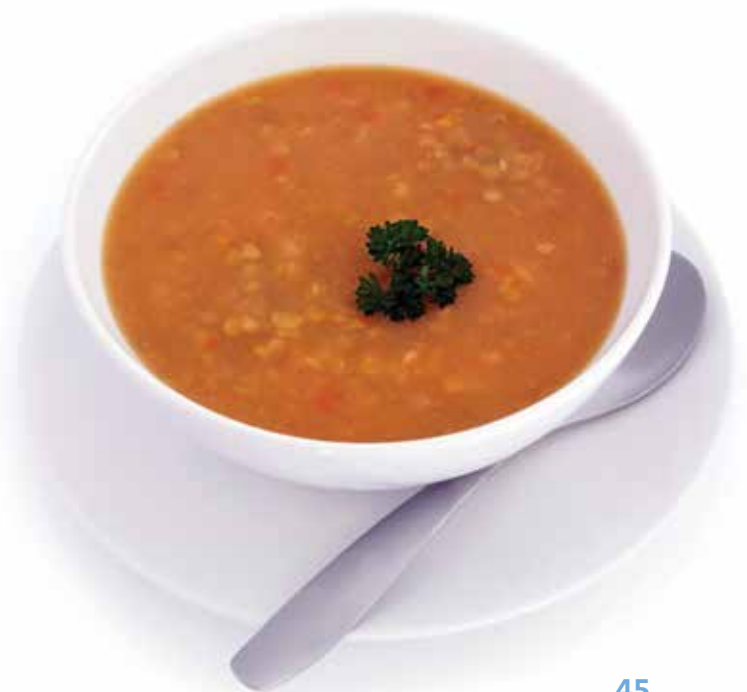
Then add the lentils, and spices, and quickly stir them through the onion and carrot mixture, to ensure lentils get coated in oil, taking care not to allow the lentils to stick.

Stir in the stock, making sure no lentils or vegetables have stayed at bottom of saucepan.

Bring to the boil, and simmer for 30mins.

Allow to cool slightly, and then blend until smooth. Serve in a warm bowl.

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	224
Protein (g)	13.3
Carbohydrate (g)	35.8
Of which sugars (g)	7.5
Total fat (g)	4.4
Saturated fat (g)	0.6
Fibre (g)	8.9
Sodium (mg)	344
Salt equivalent (g)	0.86



# Chicken, onion and raisin casserole (Serves 4)

## Ingredients

4 chicken breasts left on the bone  
1 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 medium onion, peeled and chopped finely  
1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes  
1 yellow pepper, cut into strips  
1 tbsp tomato puree  
1/2 tsp chilli powder (add more if you like it hot!)  
60g raisins  
200g long grain rice

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	460
Protein (g)	32.4
Carbohydrate (g)	62.3
Of which sugars (g)	17.9
Total fat (g)	11.8
Saturated fat (g)	2.5
Fibre (g)	5.8
Sodium (mg)	688
Salt equivalent (g)	1.72

half a chicken stock cube

75g pimiento-stuffed green olives, sliced

## Method

In a large pan, heat the oil, and lightly brown the chicken. Set chicken aside.

Add the onion and pepper to the pan until onion is colouring slightly. Add the tomato puree, stir well, and then add rest of the remaining ingredients, returning the chicken to the pan.

Cover and simmer for 30-40 minutes, until the chicken is cooked.

While the chicken is simmering, cook the rice as per the packet instructions.

To serve, place rice on plate, and serve chicken and sauce alongside.



# Pork and mushroom kebabs (Serves 4)

## Ingredients

### For kebabs

200g button mushrooms, cleaned and cut into 2.5cm/1 inch square pieces

1 large green pepper, de-seeded and cut into 2.5cm/1 inch square pieces

1 large onion, cut into 2.5cm/1 inch square pieces

350g pork steak, lean only, visible fat trimmed off and cut into 2.5cm/1 inch square pieces

### For sauce

2 tbsp rapeseed oil

2 tbsp soy sauce

2 tbsp worcester sauce

3 tbsp tomato ketchup

1 tbsp honey

1 small piece fresh ginger, grated (approx. a 3cm cube)

1 clove garlic, grated

## Method

Preheat the grill.

Thread all the ingredients onto skewers, beginning and ending with pork, and alternating vegetable pieces.

This should give 2-3 kebabs per person.

Mix the sauce ingredients thoroughly.

Brush the kebabs with sauce, and place under the grill. Cook for 10-15 mins or until cooked, turning over, and brushing again with the sauce every 2-3 mins.

Note: if using wooden skewers, soak them in a basin of water for 20 mins before using to reduce the chance of them catching alight while under the grill.

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	220
Protein (g)	21.6
Carbohydrate (g)	14.3
Of which sugars (g)	12.1
Total fat (g)	8.9
Saturated fat (g)	1.5
Fibre (g)	2.6
Sodium (mg)	864
Salt equivalent (g)	2.16

# Homemade burgers and Spicy potato wedges

## (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

500g lean beef mince

50g breadcrumbs

1 small onion, finely diced

1 egg, beaten

1 tbsp ketchup

1 tsp worcester sauce

1 tbsp sunflower oil

### To serve

4 burger buns

4 slices low-fat cheese, approx. 20g each

4 large tomato slices

4 lettuce leaves

1 small red onion, sliced into rings

### For the potato wedges

3 baking potatoes

1 tbsp sunflower oil

1 tsp sweet paprika

1/2 tsp chilli powder

Freshly ground black pepper

### For the potato wedges

Preheat oven to 220°C (210°C fan).

Wash and dry the potatoes. Leaving the skin on, slice into halves lengthways. Slice each half further into 4-5 wedges.

Toss together with the oil, paprika, chilli powder and black pepper.

Place onto a baking tray, in a single layer, and bake for 30mins, shaking the tray from time to time.



**For the burgers**

Place the beef, breadcrumbs, diced onion, egg, ketchup and worcester sauce into a bowl and mix well.

Divide into 4 equal portions, and shape into burgers, about 2cm / 1 inch thick.

Cook in sunflower oil on a large frying pan, for 5-6 minutes on each side. Alternatively, cook under a hot grill or on the barbeque.

To serve, place a cooked burger onto a burger bun. Top with a slice of low fat cheese, tomato, lettuce and onion. Divide the potato wedges among 4 people.

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	693
Protein (g)	42.5
Carbohydrate (g)	62.1
Of which sugars (g)	6.6
Total fat (g)	32.2
Saturated fat (g)	12.1
Fibre (g)	5.2
Sodium (mg)	703
Salt equivalent (g)	1.76





# Oatmeal Muffins – makes 12

These oatmeal muffins are halfway between a scone and a traditional American muffin in texture. Perfect to accompany a hearty bowl of soup, or served with low fat spread and high fruit content jam as a snack.

## Ingredients

180g porridge oats

280ml buttermilk

85g low fat spread

2 eggs, well beaten

125g self-raising flour

25g wheat germ

25g oat bran

25g mixed seeds (e.g. pumpkin and sunflower)

1 level tsp bicarbonate of soda

1/2 tsp salt

## Method

Grease a 12 hole cupcake tin

Mix together the oats and buttermilk, and set aside for 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 200°C or 190°C fan.

Mix the flour with the bicarbonate of soda and salt, and then rub in the low fat spread, until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs.

Then add the wheat germ, oat bran and seeds, followed by beaten eggs.

Lastly stir through the soaked oats, ensuring they are well mixed in.

Divide the mixture evenly into the greased tin. Each hole should be about 2/3 full.

Bake for 20 mins until dark golden brown, giving an extra 3-5 minutes if needed.

Serve with sweet or savoury toppings!

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	166
Protein (g)	6.0
Carbohydrate (g)	23.0
Of which sugars (g)	2.0
Total fat (g)	6.2
Saturated fat (g)	1.4
Fibre (g)	2.1
Sodium (mg)	276
Salt equivalent (g)	0.69

# Coriander Chicken (Serves 4)

## Ingredients

1kg chicken, cut into 8 pieces (ask your butcher to do this or buy pre-portioned chicken pieces)

500ml natural yoghurt (1 large pot)

2 level tsp ground coriander

2 level tsp ground paprika

1 level tsp ground ginger

1 level tsp turmeric

1 tbsp honey

1 lime, juiced

Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	337
Protein (g)	52.5
Carbohydrate (g)	14.8
Of which sugars (g)	13.9
Total fat (g)	8.5
Saturated fat (g)	3.4
Fibre (g)	1.4
Sodium (mg)	258
Salt equivalent (g)	0.65

## Method

Pierce the chicken all over using a fork, and place into a large bowl.

Add the remaining ingredients to the bowl (all except the fresh coriander), mixing well to ensure that the spices are well blended, and the chicken fully coated.

Cover the bowl, and place into the refrigerator for at least 4 hours (overnight is even better).

To cook, transfer the chicken to an oven proof dish and cover with foil. Bake for 45mins at 160°C (fan oven), basting every 15mins.

Place uncovered under the grill for a further 15mins to colour the chicken.

To serve, scatter fresh coriander over the top.

## To serve

3 large sprigs fresh coriander, chopped (use both leaves and stalks)

# Simple couscous salad with Chick Peas and Feta Cheese (Serves 2 as a main dish)

## Ingredients

200g couscous  
250ml boiling water  
zest and juice of lemon  
1 tbsp olive oil  
Freshly ground black pepper  
2 large sprigs parsley, chopped  
1/2 cucumber, de-seeded and diced  
10 cherry tomatoes, halved  
100g chickpeas, drained (approx. 1 small tin)  
100g sweetcorn  
120g feta cheese, crumbled



## Method

Place the couscous into a dish. Cover with the boiling water, lemon zest/juice and olive oil. Cover with cling film, and allow to absorb the liquid for 5-10mins.

When the liquids have been absorbed, fork through the couscous to break it up, and toss in the rest of the ingredients.

Serves 4 as a side dish, or 2 as a main course.

Nutrient	Amount per serving (as a side dish)
Energy Kcal	276
Protein (g)	10.9
Carbohydrate (g)	36.1
Of which sugars (g)	2.7
Total fat (g)	10.7
Saturated fat (g)	4.7
Fibre (g)	2.8
Sodium (mg)	494
Salt equivalent (g)	1.2

# Salmon with crushed peas (Serves 1)

## Ingredients

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 shallot, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 salmon darne (approx. 100g weight)
- 100g frozen peas
- 1/2 cup boiling water
- Salt and ground black pepper to season

## Method

Heat 1 teaspoon olive oil in medium or large saucepan over medium heat. Add chopped shallots and cook, for about 4-5 minutes or stirring occasionally until soft.

Add water and peas and cook a further 5 minutes until peas are tender and heated through.

With a potato masher, press down on peas and crush lightly. Add a little water if necessary to loosen mix and prevent sticking. Cover to keep warm, and set aside.

Preheat grill.

Coat salmon with the remaining teaspoon of olive oil. Place under warm grill and cook for about 3-4 minutes, then turn over and cook for further 2-3 mins. Cooking time will vary depending on thickness of fillets.

To serve, simply place the crushed peas on a serving plate and top with salmon. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



Nutrient	Amount per serving
Energy Kcal	307
Protein (g)	26.5
Carbohydrate (g)	10.4
Of which sugars (g)	3.4
Total fat (g)	17.9
Saturated fat (g)	3.0
Fibre (g)	7.2
Sodium (mg)	49
Salt equivalent (g)	0.15

# References and Acknowledgements

## References

Department of Health & HSE Healthy Eating Guidelines & Food Pyramid

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For more information on diabetes and suitable recipes for families living with diabetes please visit **[www.diabetes.ie](http://www.diabetes.ie)**

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# Notes

# Notes

# Notes

# Notes



Use the  
Food Pyramid  
overleaf to plan  
your daily food choices

◀ Open this flap to view the Food Pyramid



## The Food Pyramid

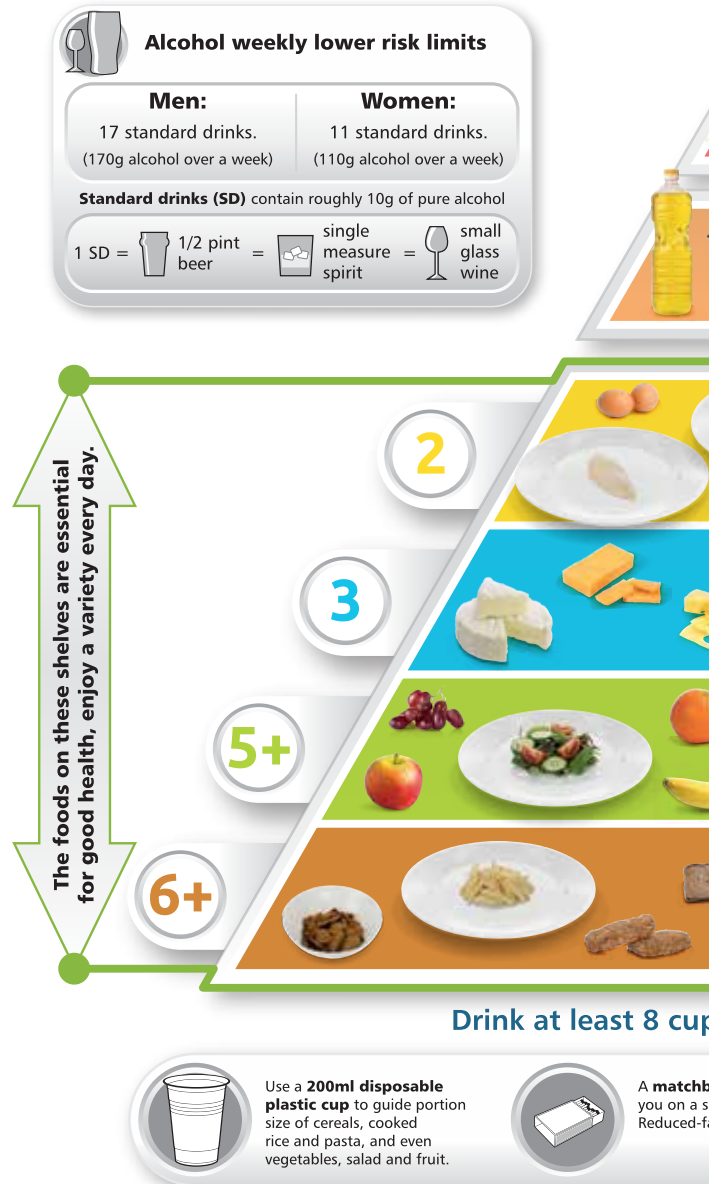
Foods that have the same type of nutrients are grouped together. Following the food pyramid as a guide will help you get the right balance of foods in your diet.

At different stages of your life, your daily requirements will be different.

They depend on your age, activity levels, and whether you are male or female.

This pyramid is intended as general advice for adults and children over 5 years.

For further advice on healthy eating, see the factsheets on [www.indi.ie](http://www.indi.ie)



# FOOD PYRAMID

to plan your daily healthy food choices



## Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt

Limit to sometimes, **not every day**.



## Reduced-fat spreads and oils

Use as little as possible. Choose reduced-fat or light spreads, 1 portion pack for 2-3 slices of bread. Choose rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower or corn oils, 1 teaspoon per person when cooking. Remember mayonnaise and salad dressing also contain oil.



## Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts

Choose lean meat and low-fat cooking methods (grilling, baking, steaming or boiling).

Choose fish twice a week – oily fish is best.

### 1 Serving size =

(The actual portion you eat may be bigger or smaller than a serving.)

50-75g cooked (100g or size of a pack of cards uncooked)  
lean beef, pork, mince or poultry  
100g cooked fish, soya or tofu  
6 dessertspoons of peas, beans or lentils  
2 eggs  
40g unsalted nuts



## Milk, yogurt and cheese

Choose 3 servings a day.

Aged 9-18 years – choose 5 servings a day.

Reduced-fat or low-fat varieties are best.

1 glass milk (200ml)  
1 carton yogurt (125g)  
1 yogurt drink (200ml)  
1 matchbox size (25g) of hard or semi-hard cheese such as cheddar or edam  
50g soft cheese such as brie or camembert



## Fruit and vegetables

Choose 5 or more servings a day.

1 medium sized fruit – apple, orange, pear or banana  
2 small fruits – plums, kiwis, mandarin oranges or 10 grapes  
½ cup or 4 dessertspoons of cooked vegetables – fresh or frozen  
1 bowl of salad – lettuce, tomato, cucumber  
100ml unsweetened fruit juice



## Breads, cereals, potatoes, pasta and rice

Choose at least 6 servings. High-fibre varieties are best. Include in each meal.

1 thin slice of bread  
2 breakfast cereal wheat or oat biscuits  
3 dessertspoons of dry porridge oats or muesli  
4 dessertspoons of flake type breakfast cereal  
3 dessertspoons of cooked pasta, rice or noodles  
1 medium or 2 small potatoes

8 glasses of fluid a day – water is best

Box can guide  
serving of cheese.  
at options are best.



The **palm of the hand**, width and depth without fingers and thumbs, shows how much meat, poultry or fish you need in a day.



**Portion packs** of reduced-fat spread found in cafes can guide the amount you use. One should be enough for 2-3 slices of bread.



A **5ml teaspoon** can guide your portion size for peanut butter, jam, marmalade or honey.

Food Pyramid for adults and children aged 5 years and over.

Who is the most important  
person to Diabetes Ireland?

**YOU ARE**

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We exist to support you



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