

Carb Counselor

ADVICE AND TOOLS FOR COUNTING CARBS



Your personal carb budget and meal plan

Before you start learning more about how to count carbs, think about what is in your daily carb budget. As you plan how to "spend" carbs, you can "budget" your daily carbs using a meal plan like the one below. Meal plan sheets are also available from your dietitian or diabetes educator at intermountainhealthcare.org/diabetes.

	Daily carb budget:
Breakfast	
Snack	
Lunch	
Snack	
Dinner	
Snack	
Total daily carb plan =	

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How to Use This Guide

Eating healthfully is a critical element of good diabetes care. But it can be confusing and tricky, especially at first. The hardest part for many people is understanding the role of carbohydrates ("carbs") and counting carbs as part of a healthy meal plan.

Use this **Carb Counselor** as a quick guide to help you learn to manage carbs. Slip it into your purse or glove box. Reach for it when you're planning meals at home. Keep it handy to guide you in making wise food choices.

YOUR GOAL IS GOOD CONTROL and you can do it!

Healthy eating is only one piece of the diabetescare puzzle. Along with other key elements, such as monitoring your blood glucose, exercising, and taking medication, healthy eating can help you feel well and stay in good control.







Basic Principles

A healthy eating plan can help you control your blood glucose levels, minimize complications and keep you feeling well. The basics of healthy eating for people with diabetes are really not much different than they are for everyone. Keep these 3 key principles in mind as you create and follow a healthy meal plan:

Establish consistent eating patterns

Keep your blood glucose levels stable by eating about the same amount of food at the same time each day.

Choose foods wisely

Make smart choices for nutritious and enjoyable meals. This means learning how to count carbs, read food labels, and create and follow a meal plan.

3 Control your portion sizes

Be aware of how many carbs are in the foods you eat. Portion sizes, especially in restaurants and packaged foods, have grown over the years. Knowing how many servings you're actually eating can help you stay healthy. See some "handy" tips on the next page.





fist = 1 cup



palm =
3 ounces



thumb tip = 1 teaspoon



handful = 1 to 2 ounces



thumb = 1 ounce

Why Count Carbs?

Counting carbs is a way to keep track of the number of grams of carbohydrate you eat each day.

Why carbs are important

All foods contain some combination of carbohydrate, fat, and protein. Fat and protein affect your blood glucose over many hours, but carbs affect it almost immediately. That's why planning and watching your carb intake is so important. Counting carbs is especially useful if you take insulin. Knowing how many carbs you eat each day — even with each meal — can help you balance your insulin and food intake.

Not all carbs are created equally

Candy, cookies, and other sweets are loaded with added sugar (a carbohydrate) but have little nutritional value. These foods are "empty calories." Even small amounts can raise your blood glucose quickly, but still leave you feeling hungry.

Fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and foods made with whole grains are more nutritious and more satisfying. They also tend to be high in fiber. Fiber-rich carbohydrates don't affect your blood glucose so dramatically. These foods are also better for your overall health — and your waistline.

How to Count Carbs

1 Determine your daily "carb budget"

Work with your dietitian or diabetes educator to decide how you will "spend" your budget with each meal and snack over the course of the day. See <u>page 2</u> for a sample of a carb budget to get you started.

2 Use food labels and food lists

See the "Tips for Reading Food Labels" on <u>page 10</u>, the food list on <u>pages 14 to 24</u>, or Intermountain Healthcare's <u>Food Finder</u> to help you determine how many grams of carbs are in the foods you eat. The Food Finder is available from your dietitian or diabetes educator, or at <u>intermountainhealthcare.org/diabetes</u>.

3 Keep good records

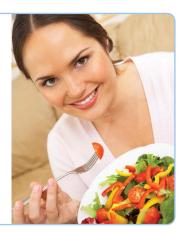
Use the carb trackers provided on <u>pages 27 to 29</u> to get started. You can print additional tracker pages off the website at <u>intermountainhealthcare.org/diabetes</u>, or use your own method of keeping track.



Click here to see the **Food Finder.**

Ready to get started?

Brush up on label-reading using the tips on the next couple of pages, and then work with your dietitian or diabetes educator to create your own carb budget and meal plan (see pages 2 and 30).



Tips for Reading Food Labels

Reading food labels can sometimes be tricky. For carb counting, here are some important tips:

Serving size and servings per container

Always check the serving size and number of servings per container. The nutrition facts are based on a single serving — not the whole container — so pay close attention.

Total carbohydrate

Total Carbohydrate is the number you should use to figure out how many grams of carbs you're eating.

- Multiply the carbs by the number of servings you eat. Example: 24 carbs x 2 servings = 48 total carbs
- Choose foods higher in dietary fiber. These carbs are healthier and have a less dramatic effect on your blood glucose.
- Note that the total carbohydrate includes fiber. Sometimes fiber may be subtracted from the total number of carbohydrates. Work with your dietitian or diabetes educator to find a solution that works for you.

Nutrition Facts

Serving size: 1 Meal
Servings per container: 1

Amount per Serv	ving	
Calories 290	Calories fro	om Fat 40
	% Daily	/ Value *
Total Fat 4.5g		7%
Saturated Fat	t 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g		
Polyunsatura	ted Fat 1.5g	
Monounsatu	rated Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 30	mg	10%
Sodium 460mg	1	19%
Potassium 680	mg	19%
Total Carbohy	drate 44g	15%
Dietary Fiber	8g	32%
Total Sugars 1	18g	
Includes 6g	added sugars	12%
Protein 17g		29%

• Note the **Servings per container** on the example on the right. If you eat 2 cups (2 servings), you get 42g + 42g, or 84g of carbohydrates.

Nutrition Facts

Serving size: 1 cup (52g)
Servings per container: about 8

Amount per Serving	Fiber \ Cereal	with½ cu skim mil
Calories	160	200
Calories from Fat	15	15
%	Daily V	alue **
Total Fat 1.5g	2%	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%	0%
Trans Fat 0g		
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5	g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0	g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	1%
Sodium 280mg	12%	15%
Potassium 320mg	9%	15%
Total Carbohydrate 42g	14%	16%
Dietary Fiber 13g	51%	51%
Soluble Fiber 3g		
Total Sugars 6g		
Includes 0g added sug	ars 0%	0%
Other Carbohydrate 23	9	
Protein 5g		
-		

In general, aim for lower values for Total Fat, Saturated Fat, Trans Fat, and Sodium (salt).

Tools

Food list

This list contains some common foods, portion sizes, and the grams of carbs they contain. Here are some things to keep in mind as you use this list:

- Foods listed in green are higher in fiber and nutrients and lower in less-healthy fats, sugars, and sodium.
- Foods with 0 grams of carb are not calorie-free. For example, margarine and butter have 0 carb grams, but a lot of fatty calories.

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
· Alfalfa sprouts	1 c raw	0
Angel food cake	1/12 cake (2 oz)	30
• Apple	1 small (4 oz)	15
· Applesauce, unsweetened	½ c	15
• Apricots	3 medium (5½ oz)	15
• Artichoke	½ c cooked	5
• Asparagus	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
• Avocado, medium	1/8 (1 oz)	2 (1 whole = 15 carbs)
Bacon, cooked	2 strips	0
Bagel	1⁄4 large	15
Baked beans	1⁄3 C	15
Bamboo shoots	½ c cooked	0

FOOD	PORTION SIZE	CARB GRAMS
• Banana	½ medium (4 oz)	15
• Barley	⅓ c cooked	15
• Bean sprouts	1 c raw	5
• Beans: garbanzo, kidney, lima, pinto, white, black	½ c cooked	15
• Beans: green, wax, or Italian	½ c cooked	5
Beef	3 oz	0
Beef pot pie	½ pie (7 oz)	21
Beef stew	1 c	15
Beer	12 oz	15
Beer, light	12 oz	5
• Beets	½ c cooked	5
Biscuit	1	25 to 30
• Blackberries	1 c	15
• Blueberries	³⁄4 C	15
• Bran flakes	½ c	15
• Bran flakes with raisins	⅓ c	15
Bread: white, raisin, or French	1 slice (1 oz)	15
· Bread, whole grain	1 slice (1 oz)	15
Breadcrumbs	1⁄4 C	15
Breadstick	1 oz	15
• Broccoli	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
Brownie, unfrosted	2" square	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Brussels sprouts	½ c cooked	5
• Bulgur	½ c	15
Bun: hamburger or hot dog	½ bun	15
Burrito, beef	1	30
Burrito, bean	1	45
Butter	1 T	0
• Cabbage: green, bok choy, or Chinese	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	0
Cake (unfrosted)	2" square	15
Cake (frosted)	2" square	30
 Cantaloupe 	1 c (11 oz)	15
Casserole	1∕2 C	15
• Carrots	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
• Cauliflower	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
• Celery	½ c	0
• Chayote	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
Cheese	1 oz	0
Cherries	20 (3 oz)	15
Chicken (skinless, white meat)	3 oz	0
Chicken pot pie	½ pie (7 oz)	18
Chili con carne with beans	½ C	15
Chow mein	2 c	15
Chow mein noodles	½ c	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
• Clams	3 oz	0
Coconut	1 c shredded	15
• Cod	3 oz	0
Coleslaw (homemade)	1 c	5
Cookie	2 small	15
Cookie, sugar-free	3 small	15
• Corn	½ c	15
· Cottage cheese, low-fat	1 c	8
Cornbread	2" cube	15
Cornflakes	³⁄4 C	15
Couscous	½ c cooked	15
• Crab	3 oz	0
Crackers: round, butter, or Saltine	6	15
• Crackers: whole wheat and/or low fat	5	15
Cranberry sauce	2 T	15
Cream	1 T	0
Cream cheese, regular	1 T	0
Croutons	1 c	15
Crystal Light®	8 oz	0
• Cucumber	½ c	0
Cupcake, frosted	1 small	30
• Dates	3 small, dried	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Dinner roll	1 small	15
Doughnut, plain	1 medium	20
Doughnut, glazed	1 medium	30
• Eggplant	½ c	5
• Egg	1	0
Energy drinks (check the label)	8 oz	30
English muffin	1/2	15
• Figs	2 medium (3½ oz)	15
• Flounder	3 oz	0
Flour	3 T	15
Franks and beans	1/3 C	15
French fries	10	15
Frosting	1 T	15
Fruit cobbler	1∕2 C	45
Fruit cocktail (in its own juice)	1∕3 C	15
Fruit juice bar	1	15
Fruit snacks	1 pkg	15
Graham crackers	3 squares	15
Gelatin, regular	1∕2 C	15
Gelatin, sugar-free	1∕3 C	0
Gingersnaps	3	15
Granola	1⁄4 c	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Grapefruit	½ large (11 oz)	15
• Grapes	15 (3 oz)	15
• Green beans	½ c	5
• Greens: collard, kale, mustard, or turnip	½ c , 1 c raw	5
Grits	½ c cooked	15
• Haddock	3 oz	0
Half and half	2 T	0
• Halibut	3 oz	0
Ham	3 oz	0
• Hearts of palm	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
Herring	3 oz	0
Honey	1 T	15
• Honeydew	1 c	15
Hot dog (meat only)	1	0
• Hummus	⅓ c	15
Ice cream, vanilla	½ c	15
Ice milk	½ c	15
Jam	1 T	15
Jelly	1 T	15
• Jicama	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
Juice: apple, pineapple, grapefruit, or orange	½ c	15
Juice: cranberry blends, grape, or prune	1∕3 C	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
• Kale	1 c	5
• Kasha	½ c	15
• Kiwi	1 medium (3½ oz)	15
• Kohlrabi	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
Koolaid®, regular	8 oz	25
Koolaid®, sugar-free	8 oz	0
Lamb	3 oz	0
Lard	1 t	0
Lasagna	1 c	30
• Leeks	1 c (bulb and lower leaf)	10
• Lentils	½ c	15
• Lettuce	1 c	0
• Lobster	3 oz	0
Macaroni and cheese	½ c	15
Mandarin oranges (canned)	½ c	15
• Mango	½ medium (5½ oz)	15
Margarine	1 T	0
Marshmallows	½ c	15
Mayonnaise, low-fat	1 T	0
Mayonnaise, regular	1 t	0
Milk, chocolate	1 c	25
· Milk, low-fat or skim	1 c	12

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Milk, regular	1 c	12
• Millet	⅓ c cooked	15
Miracle Whip®, low-fat	1 T	0
Miracle Whip [®] , regular	2 t	0
• Muesli	1⁄4 C	15
• Mushrooms	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
• Nectarine	1 medium (5 oz)	15
• Nuts, unsalted	1 T	0
• Oatmeal	½ c cooked	15
• Oats (dry)	⅓ c	15
•Oil: canola, olive, or peanut	1 t	0
Oil: corn, safflower, or soybean	1 t	0
• Okra	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
• Olives	8	0
• Onion	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
• Orange	1 small (6½ oz)	15
· Oysters, unsalted	6 medium	0
Pancake	1, 4" diameter	15
• Papaya	½ medium (8 oz)	15
Pasta	1/3 C	15
• Parsnips	½ c	15
• Peach	1 medium (6 oz)	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Peanut butter	1 T	0
• Pear	1 medium (4 oz)	15
• Peapods	½ c	5
• Peas, green	½ c	15
• Peas, split	½ c	15
• Peas, sugar snap	1 c raw	5
• Pepper, green	½ c	5
• Pepper, chili	1	0
• Perch	3 oz	0
Pie, fruit with two crusts	1/6 pie, 8" diameter	45
Pie, pumpkin or custard	1/8 pie, 8" diameter	30
• Pineapple	½ c canned, ¾ c cooked	15
Pita bread	½, 6" diameter	15
Pizza, thin crust	1/4, 12" diameter	30
Pizza, deep dish	1 slice	35
Pizza, individual	6", deep dish	65
• Plum	2 medium (5 oz)	15
• Popcorn (unsalted, air-popped)	3 c popped	15
Popsicle	2 oz	10
Pork	3 oz	0
• Potato (baked, with skin)	1/2 medium (3 oz)	15
Potato (boiled or mashed)	1∕2 C	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Potato chips	15	15
Pretzels	15	15
• Prunes, dried	3	15
Pudding, regular	1∕2 C	30
Pudding, rice	1∕2 C	40
Pudding, tapioca	1∕2 C	30
Pudding, sugar-free	1∕2 C	15
• Pumpkin seeds, unsalted	1 T	0
• Radishes	5	0
• Raisins	2 T	15
Ramen noodles	1 package	50
• Raspberries	1 c	15
• Rice: brown or wild	⅓ c cooked	15
Rice, white	⅓ c cooked	15
Rice cake	2, 4" diameter	15
• Salad greens: chicory, endive, escarole, lettuce, romaine, spinach, arugula, radicchio, watercress	1 c	0
Salad dressing, low-fat	2 T	0
Salad dressing, regular	1 T	0
• Salmon	3 oz	0
• Salsa	1⁄4 C	5

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Sardines	5	0
Sauerkraut	½ c	5
Sausage	1 oz	0
• Scallops	3 oz	0
Sesame seeds	1 T	0
Shortening	1 t	0
 Soybeans 	½ c	5
Sherbet	1∕2 C	30
• Shrimp	10 small	0
Soft drink (soda), diet	1 can (12 oz)	0
Soft drink (soda), fruit-flavored	1 can (12 oz)	50
Soft drink (soda), regular	1 can (12 oz)	40
Sorbet	1∕2 C	30
Soup, bean and bacon	³⁄4 C	15
Soup, beef vegetable	1 c	10
Soup, broth, low-sodium	1 c	0
Soup, chicken noodle	1 c	10
Soup, clam chowder with water	1 c	15
Soup, cream of chicken with water	1 c	10
Soup, cream of tomato with water	1 c	20
Soup, minestrone	1 c	10
• Soup, split pea with water, low sodium	½ c	15

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Sour cream, low-fat	3 T	0
Sour cream, regular	2 T	0
Spaghetti with sauce	1∕2 C	15
• Spinach	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
Sports drink (check label)	8 oz	15
• Squash: summer, crookneck, or zucchini	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
• Squash, winter	1 c	15
 Strawberries 	1 c	15
Stuffing, bread	1∕з с	15
Sugar	1 T	15
Sugar substitutes	1 T	0
Sunflower seeds	1 T	0
• Sweet potato	½ c	15
• Swiss chard	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	0
• Swordfish	3 oz	0
Syrup, light	2 T	15
Syrup, regular	1 T	15
Taco	1	15
• Tangerine	2 small (8 oz)	15
•Tofu	½ c	0
• Tomatoes	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
·Tomato juice, low-sodium	½ c	5

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Tortilla chips	1 oz	15
Tortilla, corn flour	1, 6" diameter	15
Tortilla, corn flour	1/3, 10" diameter	15
•Trout	3 oz	0
•Tuna	3 oz	0
Tuna casserole	1 c	30
• Turkey	3 oz	0
Turkey patty, breaded	1	15
Turnips	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5
Vanilla wafers	5	15
Veal	3 oz	0
Waffle	1, 4" square	15
 Watermelon 	1 c (13½ oz)	15
 Water chestnuts 	½ c slices	15
· Wheat, shredded	³⁄4 C	15
Wine	4 oz	0
¹ Yam	½ c	15
Yam, candied (old-fashioned)	1⁄2 C	46
· Yogurt, light	6 oz	15
Yogurt, frozen	1⁄2 C	15
Yogurt, regular	8 oz	40
• Zucchini	½ c cooked, 1 c raw	5

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Write in your own favorite foods:		

Food	Portion Size	Carb Grams
Write in your own favorite foods:		

Carb Tracker

Try it! Use the following pages to track your carbs. Make copies, download more pages from intermountainhealthcare.org/diabetes, or develop your own tracking sheet that works for you.

Date: July 23,

Meal	Food	Portion	Carb Value
Breakfast	Light yogurt	6 oz	15
	Honeydew melon	1 slice	15
	Toast, light margarine	2 slices	30
Snack	Pear	1	15
Lunch	Mixed green salad	1 cup	0
	Turkey sandwich, wheat bread	2 slices	30
	Milk	8 oz	12
	Apple	Small	15
Snack	String cheese	1	0
	Wheat crackers	5	15
Dinner	Green salad	1 cup	0
	Green beans	½ cup	5
	Baked potato	½ medium	15
	Backed salmon	3 oz	5
	Gingersnap cookies	3	15
	Strawberries	1 cup	15
	Milk	8 oz	15
Snack	Peach	1 medium	15
		Daily Total	227

Carb Tracker

Date:		

Meal	Food	Portion	Carb Value
	I	Daily Total	

Carb Tracker

_		
Date:		
Date.		

Meal	Food	Portion	Carb Value
		·	
	l l	Daily Total	

More Resources

Check out these resources for support and more "carb counseling."

Intermountain Healthcare Diabetes Handouts

intermountainhealthcare.org/diabetes

Meal Plan

A tool to help you come up with a meal plan that fits your needs and food preferences. Available online at Intermountain Patient Handouts, Enter "Meal Plan" in the search field and click Search.



Online Food Lists

choosemyplate.gov nutritiondata.com **calorieking.com** (mobile app available)

Online Advice for Menu Planning and Eating Out

diabetes.org/food-and-fitness changingdiabetes-us.com





Additional mobile apps

myfitnesspal.com gomeals.com healthydiningfinder.com



Books on Eating Out

Eating Out Food Counter. Annette B. Natow. Pocket, 1998.

The Smart-Carb Guide to Eating Out. Tracy Jones. Avery, 2004.

What to Eat When You're Eating Out. Hope S. Warshaw. American Diabetic Association, 2006.

Notes			



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