

# Diabetes & Nutrition

Celebrating National Diabetes Awareness Month

## Why the big deal about carbs?



Understanding carbohydrates (i.e. foods that affect your blood sugars) is important for the proper management of diabetes. You need to correctly portion out foods and choose the right types of carbohydrate food sources.

## Carbohydrate Types



3 main types of carbohydrates in foods:

- Starches (i.e. complex carbs)
- Sugars
- Fiber

Foods high in starch include starchy vegetables (i.e. potatoes, peas, corn), dried beans, lentils, and grains (i.e. barley, rice, oats).

Foods high in sugars include foods with naturally occurring sugars (i.e. fruit, milk) and foods with added sugars (i.e. processed foods like canned fruit or cookies).

Lastly, foods that are rich in fiber include plant foods. Fiber is not found in animal products (i.e. meat, fish, eggs, milk, and poultry). Sources of fiber include fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and whole grains. Fiber is beneficial for a number of reasons. It reduces cholesterol levels, promotes digestive health, and causes feelings of fullness after eating.

To research more information please visit the American Diabetes Association's website at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).



## Carbohydrate Counting Basics

Every person is going to require a different amount of carbohydrates. The amount required will depend upon multiple factors such as the following: activity level, medications, etc. In order to help individuals better manage their diabetes, carbohydrate counting is utilized.

“Carb counting” is a “meal planning technique for managing your blood glucose levels.” (American Diabetes Association) To determine the amount of carbs in a food item, an individual must check the food label. Grams of “total carbohydrate” on the food label refers to all types of carbs. Remember to pay close attention to this number when carb counting.

**1 carbohydrate serving = 15 grams carbohydrate**